SONGS AND SONG WRITERS

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Songs and Song Writers

By

Henry T. Finck

Author of "Wagner and His Works," "Chopin and Other Musical Essays," Etc.

With Portraits

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Preface

MANY music-lovers have doubtless asked themselves the question why it should have remained for Schubert, less than a century ago, to practically create the *Lied*, or lyric art-song. In the first two chapters of this volume I have endeavored to answer this question. The great composers and singers were so busy with mammoth oratorios, operas, symphonies, and sonatas, that the short song was esteemed hardly worthy of their serious attention; just as in England a story used to be thought of no consequence unless it filled several volumes. It is now conceded that a story of three pages may give as much evidence of literary genius as a three-volume novel, while Schubert, Franz, and others have proved the same principle in regard to music; and at present every composer writes a dozen or two, if not a hundred or two, lyric songs.

The singers, too, have become more rational. Not long ago they considered nothing short of

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an operatic or concert aria big enough for a first-class entertainment. To-day they are quite as apt to choose a short *Lied* as an elaborate aria. Special song-recitals also have multiplied remarkably of late, and the greatest operatic artists have turned their attention to them. Much has been written about the big sums paid to many of these singers; but in the seasons 1898–99 and 1899–1900 some of them —notably Mmes. Lilli Lehmann, Nordica, Sembrich, and Schumann-Heink—gave song-recitals in New York from which all arias were excluded and which yielded them three or four times as much as an evening at the opera. I call especial attention to this fact as a sign of the times. The public is obviously eager to hear good songs, having at last realized what I have been preaching for years—that there are in the realm of song more neglected gems than in any other department of music.

Robert Schumann, who was a reviewer as well as a composer, wrote, more than half a century ago, that new songs were printed in Germany every year in such abundance that one might "roof over the whole country with them." The process began long before him

and has continued ever since, till the number of *Lieder* has become as the blades of grass in a Western prairie. Unfortunately, most of these countless songs have no more individuality than those monotonous green blades; yet, by their very numbers, they absorb the world's attention, and the occasional beautiful flowers scattered among them are born to blush unseen, so far as the vast majority of the public are concerned.

How is this unfortunate condition to be remedied? Professional singers, with the exception of a few of the greatest, like the four just referred to, do not usually select songs for their beauty, but for the opportunity they give them to show off their voices to best advantage. This throws on the amateurs themselves the task of finding out what are the best songs. Few of them, however, have time or opportunity to travel over the whole vast field themselves, winnowing the chaff from the wheat. It is to save them this trouble that the present volume has been prepared — the first of its kind, strange to say, in any language.

The most important function of musical criticism is, in my opinion, discovering and calling attention to good things the merits of which

are not sufficiently known to the public, and to arouse enthusiasm for them. Therefore, instead of writing a compendium of useless knowledge about insignificant composers and antiquated songs, that have merely a historic interest—making a dry catalogue of a thousand pages that nobody would read—I have endeavored to give this short volume an eminently practical character; ignoring what is antiquated, trashy, or commonplace; mentioning, so far as possible, whatever is good; but dwelling in detail and with enthusiasm only on the best; making the book, in short, a sort of Song-Baedeker, with bibliographic foot-notes for the benefit of students who wish to pursue the subject further.

The French have a saying that the good is the enemy of the best; and it is obvious that where there is so very much to choose from as in the vast domain of lyric song, there ought to be no attention for anything but the best. No one would take his guests to a ten-cent restaurant if he could have a Delmonico dinner for the same price. Yet, musically speaking, this ridiculous thing is done a thousand times every day. The best songs of the great masters are actually *cheaper* than the epheme-

ral sheet-music products of the day. Many persons, to be sure, prefer ham and eggs and mashed potatoes to the "made-dishes" of a great *chef;* but their palates can be educated. A year's familiarity with the songs commended in this volume would make even the half-musical ashamed of their former devotion to trash, and open up endless new vistas of delight to them.

This applies to those, too, who cannot sing or get a chance to listen to good singers, provided only they have a piano. One of my chief delights is to sit at the piano and simply *play* songs, after reading the words. Many of the best *Lieder* have been transcribed for piano alone, by Liszt and others. In the case of those that have not, it is usually easy to play in the vocal part. Indeed, one great advantage of such songs without singers is that they require less technique, as a rule, than the same quality of pieces written for the piano. One of the easiest composers to treat in this way is Franz, whose songs thus make a superb addition to a pianist's library; but the player should never fail to read the poem, too, especially if he is so lucky as to understand German; and to-day all musicians are supposed to

know German just as, formerly, they were supposed to know Italian.

The editions of *Lieder* by the great masters —even those printed in Germany—now usually have English words, too, a further proof of the growing demand for good songs in America and England. Most foreign songs, unfortunately—and most good songs, unfortunately, are foreign—are marred by wretched translations. For this reason singers should never fail to get an edition that has the original text as well as a translation, and learn to sing in the original language; partly, also, for the sake of recognizing the titles, which I have thought it best to refer to, as a rule, in the original, because translations differ. If the amateur wishes a literal version of the text of a particular song, any German cobbler, or hod-carrier will do better for him than the average translator, who usually sacrifices sense, accent, and everything else to the ridiculous struggle for rhyme, which is of no use whatever in a song. What incredible atrocities this custom may lead to we see in the case of Franz's setting of Mirza Schaffy's pretty poem, *Es hat die Rose sich beklagt*. In a bare prose version the original runs thus: "The rose

complained that the fragrance imparted to it by the spring was gone so soon. But I consoled her with the assurance that it should pervade my songs and there live forever." Of this a translator has made the following caricature:

> Oh, why so soon, the rose complained,
> Must all my loveliness be dying?
> Oh! far too soon my days are flying.
> Then have I to her comfort said,
> That by my little song I'd claimed
> A lasting spring to crown her head.

Such vandalism ought to be a State-prison offence.

In reviewing my *Chopin and other Musical Essays* the critic of the London *Athenæum* referred to the author as "a typical exemplar of what may be called free thought in music." The reader will probably find a considerable amount of "free thought" in this volume, too, and it will perhaps in some cases annoy, if not anger, him. But I am convinced that there is in the musical world too much parroting of traditional opinions, and that we need to adjust our opera-glasses anew two or three times during every hundred years. The opinions ad-

vanced in this volume may in some cases be wrong; but they are at any rate my own opinions. Not a single song have I commented on without having played it over myself; nor have I hesitated to say, for instance, that most of Beethoven's songs are poor stuff, or that of Schumann's two hundred and forty-five songs only twenty are first class; any more than I hesitate to say that of my four favorite song-writers two are still living, and one is an American; the four being Schubert, Franz, Grieg, and MacDowell.

H. T. F.

NEW YORK, October 1, 1900.

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Songs and Song-Writers

I

Folk-Song and Art-Song

JENNY LIND appreciated no other compliment so much as being called "the Swedish nightingale," and the same was true of Christine Nilsson. No one who has ever heard a nightingale singing in his grove will wonder at this. "Full, rich, and liquid, the notes fall with a strange loudness into the still night," writes Benjamin Kidd. "Sweet, sw-e-e-t, sw-e-e-t—lower and tenderer the long-drawn-out notes come, the last of the series prolonged till the air vibrates as if a wire had been struck, and the solitary singer seems almost to choke with the overmastering intensity of feeling in the final effort."

While musicians are bound to acknowledge and admire the sensuous beauty of tone and the emotional intensity and sincerity of bird-song, there is another point of view from which the Swedish prima donnas had less reason to feel proud of having their song compared to that of a bird. Strictly speaking, bird-

song is not true song, but belongs in a class by itself, intermediate between vocal and instrumental music. It is vocal in so far as the bird uses his own voice, but instrumental inasmuch as no words are used. What raises man above the animals is articulate speech; and it is the power of adding speech to song, poetry to melody, that makes human song vocal in the fullest and highest sense of the word. From this point of view it would be the rankest flattery to a nightingale to compare him to Jenny Lind or Christine Nilsson.

SONGS OF SAVAGES

The lower races of mankind do not yet make much use of this higher and unique double function of the human voice. Though they have plenty of crude music their tunes are usually songs without words, or with words that do not mean anything. Miss Alice Fletcher says, in her suggestive *Study of Omaha Indian Music*, that "comparatively few Indian songs are supplied with words." Wallaschek, summing up his researches relating to the lower races in all parts of the world, declares that "the most striking feature of all the savage songs is the frequent occurrence of words with no meaning whatever"; and that

"in primitive times vocal music is not at all a union of poetry and music. We find, on the contrary, vocal music among tribes which, owing to the insufficient development of language, cannot possibly have any kind of poetry." In his entertaining book on the Australian savages Lumholtz relates that "they themselves sometimes do not understand the words which they sing"; and Curr tells us how songs that are sung at the corroborees, or nocturnal dances, pass from one tribe to others who often have no idea of the meaning of the words, since every one of the wandering tribes has its own language.*

Not all the songs of savages, however, have the instrumental character just referred to. Many of them are improvisations sung in the evening on the events of the day, and in these cases the words are as important as the tunes, if not more so; though the "sentiments" are, of course, extremely trivial and selfish. Thus Ehrenreich relates† how the Botocudos of Brazil amuse themselves in the evening by singing "To-day we had a successful hunt; we killed this or that animal; now we have enough

* Lumholtz, *Among Cannibals*, pp. 157–158; Curr, *The Australian Race*, vol. i., p. 92.

† *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, vol. xix., p. 32.

to eat; meat is good to eat, brandy is good to drink," and so on. A good sample of the aboriginal Australian song is the following:

> The Kangaroo ran very fast,
> But I ran faster;
> The Kangaroo was fat;
> I ate him.
> Kangaroo! Kangaroo!

The American Indians had war-songs, prayers for good weather and for success in various enterprises, calls to ceremonial repast, songs of thanks, mystery songs, dance and game songs, and so on. In these we have the germs of the folk-songs of mediæval Europe. It must be remembered that our own ancestors were, two thousand years ago, barbarians like the American Indians. Tacitus relates that it was the custom of the northern warriors to sing the exploits of their great heroes, and that they had another kind of war-songs which they used to arouse a warlike spirit in themselves and at the same time to inspire terror in the enemy. On festive occasions, he says, "the barbarians made the valley and mountains echo their joyous song and their loud, wild noises."

EARLY EUROPEAN FOLK-SONGS

It would be interesting to know just how our barbarian ancestors sang, and what changes their music passed through before it assumed the form of the mediæval folk-songs that have been preserved for us. But there was no phonograph in those days, nor any practical way of writing music. When Christianity began to extend its influence more widely, in the seventh century, the aboriginal music of the Teutons, moreover, came into conflict with the imported Gregorian chant of the Church, and the churchmen made systematic efforts to destroy the old heathen tunes that were dear to the populace from long association with their customs and superstitions. Some centuries later, when the church composers began to record music in a permanent way, the heathen folk-music was still left out in the cold; for these composers were naturally more anxious, as Dr. Riemann has aptly remarked, to hand down to posterity the products of their own pens than the folk-songs, which were like wild flowers that have to take care of themselves.

Luckily, however, they did not disdain, on occasion, to adopt these folk-songs as *cantus firmi*, or themes, and weave them as tenor melo-

dies, not only into their secular, but also their sacred compositions. This process began as early as the twelfth century, and to it we owe the preservation of not a few of the old songs—though just how old, no one can say. In some cases the popular melody was apparently kept intact; in others, where it was introduced into a sacred composition, it had to be disguised, more or less, on account of the frivolous or ribald text associated with it; and still more frequently the exigencies of composition induced the writers to disguise the tunes by shortening, lengthening, or otherwise changing them. However, by comparing the different versions of the same melody made by several composers, scholars have been enabled to restore some of the originals with tolerable accuracy.

FOLK-SONG PRECEDES ART-SONG

Historians of music have an incomprehensible habit of speaking of a special "period of folk-song," and they discourse learnedly in regard to its date—whether it was in the fourteenth or the sixteenth century. Rockstro gives the readers of his *History of Music* the extraordinary information (pp. 37–41) that secular song originated among the Troubadours and Minnesingers, passed from them to the Meistersingers,

and thence "brought its beneficent influence to bear upon the great mass of the people," in the form of the national or folk song! As a matter of fact folk-song has always existed in one form or another, as we have just seen; and as regards the Troubadours (who flourished from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries) there is every reason to believe that most of their tunes were either copies of Gregorian chants or imitations of the current folk-songs. Dr. Schneider, after an elaborate discussion of this question,* comes to the conclusion that there is little originality in the Troubadour songs or in those of the German Minnesingers; while the pedantic artisans who vaingloriously called themselves Mastersingers, not only derived most of their tunes from the church, but were sworn enemies of the naïve, simple folk-music. Wagner brings out this point vividly in his comic opera *Die Meistersinger*, wherein these masters express their contempt for the beautiful melody Walter sings, when he explains—in answer to their question as to who was his teacher—that the songs of birds and other sounds of nature had taught him how to sing.

Rockstro's radical error lies in the assump-

*H. E. Schneider, *Das deutsche Lied in geschichtlicher Entwickelung*. Three vols. Leipzig, 1863. Vol. i., p. 237 *seq*.

tion that music was given to the people by professionals. As a matter of fact, music "just growed" among the people. They invented songs for every phase of life, from the cradle to the grave, in the cities as well as in the country. Lovers, soldiers, students, hunters, peasants, shepherds, workingmen—all had their peculiar ditties. There were songs serious, songs comic or satirical; songs relating to the home, the field, the forest, the sea; songs of nature and travel, of parting and reunion; drinking, wedding, mourning songs; with a thousand others of local, national, or historic interest. For local color the Laplander has his reindeer-songs, the Russian his songs of the steppe and the snow-field, the Southern negro his plantation-songs, the Swiss and Tyrolean mountaineer his *Yodler*, and so on in all parts of the world.*

* The discussion of these various national phases of music would fill a big volume. Indeed, Carl Engel has compiled a book of over a hundred pages—*The Literature of National Music* (London, 1879)—containing merely the titles and brief descriptions of important collections of national music, or of treatises on the subject. See also the section on national music in the *Annotated Bibliography of Fine Art and Music* by Russell Sturgis and H. E. Krehbiel, pp. 61–63. Some remarks on "exotic" folk-songs may be found in my article "Music in Russia, Poland, Scandinavia, and Hungary," printed in Professor Paine's *Famous Composers and Their Works*. Boston, 1891. Vol. ii., pp. 845–866. For fuller details see Mrs. Wodehouse's excellent article on Song in

ORIGIN OF FOLK-SONGS

It is probable that, as I have said elsewhere, "some of the finest folk-songs were first invented by crude peasants in moments of grief or joy. Such crudities as remained in this song were gradually removed as it went from mouth to mouth, as pebbles are polished by constant friction; and finally a melody remained as finished and epigrammatic as those proverbs of the people which have a similar origin, and as perfect in form as a professional genius could have made them." On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that some of the best folk-tunes may have been conceived by men of genius. Suppose a Schubert or a Wagner were born among peasants (such a thing is quite possible) in a region where there was not even a piano. Instead of writing art-songs with elaborate accompaniments, or still more elaborate operas, such a genius would have to confine himself to originating simple melodies. He might enjoy some local fame as a tune-maker, but that fame would die with

Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. iii., pp. 584–632. This article has, indeed, much more to say about folk-song than about art-song. The evolution of folk-song from a formal point of view is admirably discussed in chapter iii. of Dr. Parry's *Evolution of the Art of Music*.

him, and in the meantime his song would have travelled from mouth to mouth to distant villages and countries, every one enjoying it but no one caring for its author's name.

THE FIRST SONG-WRITERS

These considerations explain why folk-songs seem national rather than individual products, and why it was that for the first thousand years of the Christian era music was nameless. *There were plenty of songs, but no song-writers.* Professed, deliberate inventors, who proudly attached their names to the poems and tunes conceived by them are not encountered before the eleventh century, when we come across the Troubadours in Southern France. The names of about four hundred and fifty Troubadours of all ranks have come down to us; but, as just stated, their art was derived chiefly from the folk-song, notwithstanding the derivation of their name from *trobar* or *trouver*, to find or invent. We must also bear in mind that the creative faculty is rare always and everywhere, and that we therefore naturally expect to find more originality and merit in miscellaneous folk-songs, the productions of millions of nameless singers, than in the courtly songs of a few hundred named Troubadours.

TROUBADOUR ACCOMPANIMENTS

Inasmuch as many of the Troubadours and Minnesingers travelled about, like common minstrels, from castle to castle, exercising their art to make a living, they may be classed among professionals. It is likely that in this capacity they helped to develop one side of their art which chiefly distinguishes the art-song from folk-song — the *instrumental accompaniment.* While folk-songs are commonly conceived as melodies requiring no accompaniment and usually sung without it, the mediæval bards under consideration habitually sang to an instrumental accompaniment. That no special importance was, however, attached to it is evident from the fact that the old musical manuscripts contain no traces of these instrumental accompaniments. We know that various instruments were used—mediæval varieties of the fiddle, the harp, the zither, the bagpipe, etc.—but just how they sustained the voices remains a matter of conjecture. In many cases, no doubt, the instrument simply played along the vocal melody, while the harplike instruments supplied an occasional arpeggio, possibly a few chords—though it must be remembered that the use of chords implies some knowledge

of harmony, and the harmonic sense was only just beginning to develop at this time. In all probability the chords played by these minstrels were as erratic as those that so many of our untrained singers perpetrate when they try to play their accompaniments on the pianoforte.

FOLK-SONG IN THE CHURCH

The Troubadours and Minnesingers may be regarded as the professional representatives of mediæval *secular* art. Not content with capturing them, the folk-song also invaded the province of *church* music. Believing that the service could be made more impressive by again allowing the congregation—as in the early days of Christianity—to join in with song, Luther adopted a number of the most popular folk-songs and substituted them for the monotonous Gregorian chants. The populace could thus give vent to their enthusiasm in a language that they understood; and the enemies of Luther were doubtless right in holding that the success of the Reformation was greatly promoted by thus invoking the aid of congregational folk-song.

This was in the sixteenth century, but we have already seen that the church composers had begun as early as the twelfth century to

weave folk-songs into their compositions. The result was, however, more ingenious than artistic; and this brings us to an important point —the inferiority of the mediæval art-music to the folk-song. The unknown creators of folk-songs not only invented their own verses as well as their tunes, but invented both at the same time. We have here an interesting illustration of the adage that "extremes meet." In all genuine folk-songs words and music are born twins, just as they are in the music dramas of Richard Wagner. In the folk-song, as Wagner himself wrote, "the word-poem and the tone-poem are one and the same thing. The people never think of singing their songs without words. . . . If in course of time and among different peoples a melody varies, the poem varies with it; separation of the two is inconceivable to those who sing them; they seem to belong together, like husband and wife."

Even when folk-music was harmonized, as in the madrigals and *frottole* which were so popular in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the voices were managed in such a way that the words were still intelligible. But in the polyphonic (*i.e.*, many-voiced) art-music all respect for the words was cast aside and the melodic harmonies were woven into such complicated

woofs that it became impossible to follow and understand the words.

With some honorable exceptions the composers of polyphonic art-music were too much inclined to treat their tasks as mathematical problems or Chinese puzzles rather than as a means of artistic expression. Sometimes vocal pieces were written with as many as thirty different parts. In some of the canons the second voice had to begin at the end of the opening melody and crawl backward like a crawfish—hence called a crab-canon. In other cases the singers had to guess at what bar they must come in, or guess what key they must sing in! Sometimes the voices had to sing together in different time. The direction *clama ne cesses* (bawl without stopping) meant that the rests were to be ignored; *noctem in diem vertere*, that the light notes must be read as dark ones, etc.

WHAT LED TO ITALIAN OPERA

It is one of the most interesting facts in the history of music, that Italian opera originated partly in a spirit of rebellion against this complicated polyphonic music, which had once more degraded the human voice to the level of an inarticulate instrument. The inventors of Italian opera held, with the Greek philosopher

Plato, that of the three components of music, speech was first in importance, rhythm next, and melody third. They not only tabooed the Chinese puzzles of the church composers, but they went so far in their eagerness to do justice to the words as to manifest in their compositions what one of them boastingly called "a noble contempt for melody"—*nobile sprezzatura del canto.*

To those of us who remember the operas of Rossini and Donizetti, in which the words are mere pegs for the florid tunes, this seems a strange attitude for Italians to assume. In truth it was not much more than a fad—an attempt to revive the glories of the Greek drama, in which music was united with the spoken words. Italian opera soon threw overboard the respect for words shown by its originators, and its chief attraction became the *da capo aria,* the object of which was to show off a singer's lung power and agility. The favorites of the eighteenth-century Italian audiences were artificial male sopranos, like Farinelli, who was frantically applauded for such circus tricks as beating a trumpeter in holding on to a note, or racing with an orchestra and getting ahead of it; or Caffarelli, who entertained his audiences by singing, *in one breath,* a chromatic chain of trills up and down two octaves. Caffarelli was a pu-

pil of the famous vocal teacher Porpora, who wrote operas consisting chiefly of monotonous successions of florid arias resembling the music that is now written for flutes and violins.

To such depths had art-song degenerated on the operatic stage. Not all Italian opera-composers, it is true, allowed their music thus to degenerate into mere displays of instrumental vocalism. Lulli and Rameau in France, Purcell in England were also among those who had higher ideals. But it took a courageous and determined reformer like Gluck to establish the great principle of the music-drama that "the play's the thing" and the music merely a means of heightening the effect of the words, as a painter brightens a sketch by coloring it. He was the right man at the right time; yet what he did was no more than applying to the opera what had long been the vital principle of folk-song.

JUMBOMANIA AND THE LIED

The folk-song, however, did not get the credit for having anticipated and suggested this great reform. On the contrary, it languished in obscurity and contempt. For nearly two centuries, from Scarlatti to Donizetti, the operatic aria flourished rankly, ruling the musical world not only in the theatre but in the cantata and

the oratorio. It was the "big thing" in vocal music, as the sonata was for the piano-forte, the symphony for the orchestra. During all this time the short song was looked on as hardly worthy of the attention of serious composers. Even when a simple song was introduced in a larger work it went by the name of "ode" or "aria." The folk-song, or *Lied*, was tabooed in professional circles. We have here, in fact, another illustration of what I have elsewhere called Jumboism * or Jumbomania—the tendency to esteem art in proportion to its bulk, to measure it with a yardstick—the tendency which even in the nineteenth century prevented Chopin and Franz from being at once recognized as geniuses of the first rank, because they wrote no five-act operas or four-story symphonies, but only short pieces and songs. On this principle an elephant like Jumbo would be a finer animal than a humming bird or a bird of paradise, a sunflower more beautiful than a pansy.

BACH AND HANDEL

From this point of view—and from this only—can we understand why it remained for Schubert to practically create the lyric art-

* *Chopin and Other Musical Essays*, 1889, pp. 6–8.

song which we now call the *Lied*. Nothing could more vividly illustrate the contemptuous disregard of the *Lied* in the eighteenth century than the fact that Bach and Handel (both born in 1685) paid no attention to it. Bach wrote thirty volumes of cantatas, passions, and other species of vocal music, but only two *Lieder*—according to some authorities only one.* Handel wrote thirty-nine Italian and three German operas, two Italian and nineteen English oratorios, twenty anthems, etc., but only one song—a hunting song for bass voice.†

There was of course nothing in the world to prevent Bach and Handel from writing immortal *Lieder*, had they felt inclined to do so. Bach's cantatas contain many arias that are as melodious and as expressive as a Schubert song, while his recitatives are often so flexible and eloquent, so imbued with the spirit of the words, so passionately dramatic, that they foreshadow the latest developments of the *Lied* and the music-drama in Franz, Liszt, and Wagner. Handel is more florid and less dramatic than

* Spitta: *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 1880, vol. i., pp. 759, 834, 835, accepts the *Erbauliche Gedanken eines Tabackrauchers* as genuine, while rejecting the *Willst du dein Herz mir schenken*; whereas Schneider (vol. iii., p. 184) believes that both were written by Bach.

† See Grove, vol. iii., p. 621.

Bach, yet his operas and oratorios also contain arias in abundance that vie with our best *Lieder*.*

Unlike Bach and Handel, the great German classics who followed them—Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven—did write a number of lyric songs, some of them genuine *Lieder*, wherefore our attention must be bestowed on them. We shall find, however, that they, too, were unconsciously infected with Jumbomania, for they treated the *Lied* as a mere trifle, unworthy of their best efforts.

* The great song specialist, Robert Franz, spent half his life editing and restoring the works of Bach and Handel. He issued several collections of arias selected from their vocal works which cannot be too highly commended to the attention of singers.

II

German Song-Writers Before Schubert

GLUCK

GLUCK was already sixty-three years old when (in 1770) he wrote his first and only songs with piano-forte accompaniment. They were a musical setting of seven odes by the poet Klopstock, and they appeared in print under the elaborate title of "*Klopstocks Oden und Lieder beym Clavier zu singen in Musik gesetzt von Herrn Ritter Gluck, cum Priv. S. C. M., zu finden in Wien bey Artaria & Compagnie.*" *

Before Klopstock had had a chance to hear this setting of his odes he had been told "by a great authority" (as he wrote to a friend) that Gluck was "the only poet among the composers," and that all who had heard these songs had been much pleased with them. This admiration it is impossible for us to share,

* No. 2,250 of the Edition Peters comprises a reprint of this original edition, besides two arias, with an appendix containing explanatory notes by Max Friedländer.

for these songs are simple to the verge of puerility. The melody moves along in conventional intervals without charm or originality, and the only harmonic touch of interest that I have noticed is in *Der Jüngling*, after the words "Donner Sturm." It is amusing to read that one day when Gluck and his niece paid Klopstock a visit the poet wished the niece to sing for him the *Willkommen du silberner Mond*, but that Gluck objected on the ground that she could not yet do it, whereupon "he sang it himself with a rough voice"; amusing, I say, because the ode is as simple as a folk-song. The niece did, however, sing for the poet "in an enchanting way" the ode, *Ich bin ein deutsches Mädchen*, which has been incorporated in a school-book for German girls, and is therefore the best known of these melodies. The best of them, however, is *Die Sommernacht*.

It is interesting to note that these odes were composed just about the time that Gluck wrote his famous *Alceste* preface, in which he explained his operatic reforms. As was to be expected, he applied to the song with pianoforte accompaniment the same reforms as to the operatic aria, eliminating all superfluous ornament, adapting the melodic accent carefully to the word-accent, and making the

melody heighten the effect of the text as color does that of a sketch in painting. In this, and in this alone, lies Gluck's title to remembrance as a song-writer. He evidently did not consider it worth while to bestow as much care on a simple, detached song as on an operatic aria.

HAYDN

Regarded simply as music, Haydn's songs are much more interesting than Gluck's; but from the point of view of the ideal *Lied* they are inferior, because they are absolutely instrumental in character. Whereas Gluck sought, above all things, to make the music reflect the spirit and letter of the poem, Haydn was habitually as reckless as any composer of fashionable Italian operas, in using his text merely as a peg to hang his tunes on.

It cannot be said that the songs he wrote with piano-forte accompaniment* are without all claims to consideration. His *Liebes Mädchen, hör' mir zu* is as graceful and pretty as a folk-song, somewhat suggestive of Schubert's *Heideröslein*. In the two introductory bars to *Lachet nicht, Mädchen* there is also, perhaps, a slight

* No. 1,351 of the Edition Peters is a collection of thirty-four Haydn *Lieder*.

foreshadowing of Schubert; while *An die Freundschaft* is a pleasing little song in the folk style, of the religious variety. In *O süsser Ton* the accompaniment has in part the genuine character of the modern German *Lied*, with splendid harmonies in the three bars preceding the words "In Echo's Kluft." Interesting harmonies are also to be found in *Stets barg die Liebe sich*, in which the music that goes with the words "Sie glich der Duldung" again foreshadow Schubert. In *Der Umherirrende* there are a few bars ("Unken wehklagen" and "Thal verdoppelt das Grausen") of genuine characterization in music of the dismal suggestiveness of the words ("where tree-toads with their plaintive notes, and the hooting owls increase the weirdness of the lonely vale").

The best by far, and the most famous of Haydn's songs is his patriotic hymn *Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser* (*God save our Emperor Francis*).

Apart from this song and the details already noted in a few others, there is little to commend in Haydn's productions in this line. *Ein Kleines Haus* and *Antwort auf die Frage eines Mädchens* are not bad as instrumental pieces, but as *Lieder* they do not pass muster. His *English Sailor's Song* (*Matrosenlied*) has so little of a specific marine character that it might

as well be sung to "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Modern taste requires more spice in music, and to-day even an inferior cook would understand that he must put more salt into a sailor's song. To realize vividly how fastidious we have become, as compared with the music-lovers of a century ago, the reader may compare Haydn's placid, shallow, and frigid *First Kiss* (*Der erste Kuss*) with the passionate ecstasy of Chopin's *My Delights.*

MOZART

Unlike Haydn, Mozart was specifically a composer for the voice. When he was only fourteen years old his opera *Mitridate* was produced in Milan and repeated twenty times. All but two of his operas were written to Italian librettos, and it is not an idle boast of the Germans that their Mozart's *Don Giovanni* is the best of all *Italian* operas. No Italian composer, either of the old Neapolitan school or among those of the nineteenth century—Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini—was a greater master than Mozart of the *bel canto* or beautiful song; either in the broad, expressive *cantabile* or in the *fioriture* (vocal embroideries).

All the more surprising is it that Mozart did hardly anything to help along the *Lied.*

Among his three dozen or more songs,* there are not even as many as among Haydn's that present any points of interest. In looking through my collection I found only five that I would care to hear again: the cradle song, *Schlafe mein Prinzchen*, *Sei du mein Trost*, *Das Lied der Trennung*, *Das Veilchen*, and *Ich würd' auf meinem Pfad;* and of these only *Das Veilchen* (*The Violet*) ranks with the songs that live apart from the fame of their makers. The others in this collection would not be reprinted to-day, were it not for Mozart's name on the title-page. Some of them are almost incredibly weak, from every point of view; in many of them the text is maltreated as to accentuation, and its emotional import is not reflected in the melody; while others are marred by pompous operatic phraseology.

The Violet is free from these blemishes. It is charming in melody; simple, but expressive, in its harmonies. Here, for once, Mozart condescended to give us his best, inspired as he must have been by Goethe's exquisitely pathetic poem about the modest violet which, when the lovely maiden coming across the meadow does

* The exact number is uncertain. Some songs are incorrectly attributed to Mozart; while others, perhaps by him, bear the names of other writers.

not—as it had hoped—stoop to pick it to adorn her bosom, yet dies happy because it is *her* foot that crushes out its life.

The time for the musical *Lied* had, however, not yet come. Even Mozart gave the modest violet only a passing thought; for the rest, he was, like the world in general, interested chiefly in musical sunflowers. The symphony, the sonata, the opera absorbed the attention of the musical world; to write long-drawn-out arias was the ambition of the composers, to sing them the desire of the vocalists. The Jumbomania had not yet subsided. Mozart, like Bach, Handel, and Haydn, wrote many melodies that would have made excellent songs; but he preferred to work them up as operatic arias, or as the slow movements in his symphonies and quartets. Such gems were not to be wasted on a mere Cinderella like the *Lied*.

BEETHOVEN

In Beethoven we still find this disposition to treat the *Lied* as a mere bagatelle, unworthy of a composer's best thoughts and efforts. Indeed, he represents the climax of the tendency toward big things. Not only was the sonata, the symphony in four movements, his special sphere, but he took particular delight in en-

larging the several movements. His *Eroica* is twice as long as any symphony preceding it. From such a man we must not expect much sympathy for the short *Lied;* and we are not surprised to hear that he remarked to Rochlitz: "Songs I do not like to write."

Beethoven's indifference to the *Lied* is, however, less remarkable than Mozart's, because he was not, like Mozart, a born composer for the voice; but rather, like Haydn, an instrumental specialist. The list of his works into which the voice enters is insignificant compared with his compositions for instruments; and although one of his most striking innovations was the introduction of vocal solos, quartets, and choruses into his last symphony he did not, like Haydn, learn in his later years to treat the voice in a more vocal manner.

In view of Beethoven's declaration that he did not like to compose songs, it is surprising to find nevertheless that complete collections of his *Lieder* contain more than sixty numbers. At least two-thirds of these are utterly unworthy of their composer. In going over my volume, a few days ago, with pencil behind my ear, I found occasion to mark forty-five of them as "poor," "childish," "empty," "mediocre:" namely, numbers 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21–25, 30, 32–39, 40, 41, 45–49,

50–59, 60, 62, 63 in the Breitkopf & Härtel edition. Fifteen I marked "fair" or "not bad," while only three have the word "good" attached to them. Judgment and taste differ, of course; I can only speak for myself. The three I have marked "good" are the only ones I should care to have put on a program for my own entertainment. They are *Adelaide*, *Die Ehre Gottes aus der Natur*, and *In questa tomba*.

Adelaide was composed when Beethoven was only twenty-five years of age, and there are good reasons for holding that in the later years of his life he had no special liking for it. There were moments when he felt inclined to destroy —could he have done so—some of his early compositions, including *Adelaide* and the Septet; but that was doubtless due largely to the impression that those works had an undue share of popularity as compared with better things of his that were not sufficiently known and appreciated at the time. He cannot have been so lacking in self-judgment as not to know that *Adelaide* was far superior to most of his songs; and he must have been greatly interested in the poem when he set it to music, for he wrote to its author, Matthison, that he considered it "heavenly."

Structurally *Adelaide* is not a model *Lied*,

being rather a solo cantata in the old Italian sense of the word. To music-lovers, however (as distinguished from professionals), the form of a song is a matter of subordinate importance. The vast majority of them have no more thought of analyzing the form of a piece of music than they have of parsing a poem they like or of dissecting a flower they admire, after the manner of a botanist. They ask merely, "Is the melody fresh and pleasing, the rhythm stirring, the harmony varied and interesting?" and if these questions can be answered in the affirmative they take the song to heart, even though it be not symmetrical in form. From this point of view *Adelaide* is a good song. Partly, perhaps, because it is a sort of enlarged "lyric scene" rather than a *Lied*, he did not grudge it some of the original melodic ideas of which he was so prolific in his instrumental works, and took pains to elaborate the accompaniment in accordance with the spirit of the text, introducing descriptive details and atmosphere.

Die Ehre Gottes aus der Natur is one of a group of religious songs of a choral-like character, foreshadowing some of Franz's *Lieder*, while *In questa tomba oscura* (*In this dark tomb*) is known to concert-goers as a sombre setting of a sombre text—a disappointed lover's bitter

cry for the rest which the grave alone can bring him.

In others of his songs Beethoven was less successful than here in creating a musical atmosphere in harmony with the mood of the poem—in *Wonne der Wehmuth*, for instance, or in the *Liebes-Klage*. For the expression of humor he shows still less aptitude. In *Urian's Reise um die Welt* (*Urian's trip around the world*) the only comic thing, to my mind, is the repetition, no less than fourteen times, of Beethoven's commonplace twelve bars of music. Again, what fun there is in *The Kiss* ("*Ich war bei Chloen ganz allein*") is entirely in the text; nor does the music of Beethoven's setting of the flea song from Goethe's *Faust* ("*Es war einmal ein König*") reflect the spirit of the poem.

Nothing, indeed, proves more conclusively the purely instrumental character of Beethoven's genius than his failure to be inspired by Goethe's poems, highly though he esteemed them. Herein he differed from Mozart, as we have seen. From Haydn he differed in this, among other things, that patriotism did not help him to write anything even remotely comparable to *Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser*. His *Kriegslied der Oesterreicher* (*War-song of the Austrians*), composed in the same year as

Haydn's national anthem, is extraordinarily weak—almost childish, though he was twenty-seven when he wrote it. Even love—and he was often in love—did not teach him to write immortal songs, though the majority of his songs belong to the erotic genre.

The fifteen songs which I have marked as having some merit, but not enough to enable them to rank among the gems of German song, are *An die Hoffnung*, *Gott deine Güte*, *Vom Tode*, *Gottes Macht*, *Mailied*, *Marmotte*, *Gretel's Warnung*, *L'amante impaziente*, *Lebens-Genuss*, *Wonne der Wehmuth*, *Sehnsucht*, *Das Glück der Freundschaft*, *Opferlied*, *Der Wachtelschlag*, *Als die Geliebte sich trennen wollte*. In several of these the excellence lies chiefly in some interesting detail of the accompaniment; and it may be said in general that Beethoven's direct contributions to the development of the *Lied* lie almost entirely in this direction. I have been particularly interested in finding a few songs in which the accompaniment foreshadows Schubert. One of these is *Sehnsucht*, especially at the words "*möcht ich hinüber, da möcht ich wohl hin.*" The fifth and sixth bars of *Vom Tode*, and more strikingly *Als die Geliebte sich trennen wollte*, suggest details of Schubert's *The Wanderer*. Beethoven's *Marmotte* also makes one think of Schubert's *Leiermann* (*Hurdy-gurdy*

man). The subject is somewhat similar, though Beethoven's text is a comic mixture of German and French:

Ich komme schon durch manches Land
Avec que la marmotte
Und immer was zu essen fand
Avec que la marmotte*
(the last line being repeated five times);

whereas Schubert's *Leiermann* moves us to tears not only because "his tray remains always empty," but because of the heart-rending pathos of the exquisite music, which is infinitely superior to Beethoven's.

REICHARDT, ZELTER, AND ZUMSTEEG

While the great German and Austrian masters from Handel, Bach, and Gluck to Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven thus allowed their attention to be almost entirely absorbed by works of larger dimensions, there arose a class of minor composers who did not scorn the *Lied*, but carefully cultivated it. Unfortunately they were only men of talent, while genius was required to raise the *Lied* to the same rank as the opera, the sonata, and the symphony. They

*"I have wandered through many a land with my marmot and have always got something to eat."

helped to create what the Germans call the *volksthümliche Lied*, which consciously aims at the simplicity of the folk-song while not entirely disdaining the acquisitions of art-music in the accompaniments. Of these composers the most important were Schulz (1747–1800), Reichardt (1752–1814), Zelter (1758–1832) and Zumsteeg (1760–1802). Schulz held that a melody should fit the words as a well-made dress fits the body—as is the case in the best folk-songs—and he was lucky in being able to avail himself of the verses of some good poets, such as Bürger and Voss.

Reichardt also took the folk-song as his model, insisting that song-composers should return to it as the source of the *Lied*. He was the first who made a specialty of Goethe's lyrics, of which he set to music no fewer than one hundred and twenty-five. Goethe himself had been much influenced by the folk-poems, the charms of which had been unveiled to him by Herder's collections. Reichardt succeeded with his music in heightening the charm of the more gay and superficial poems of Goethe ; but for the expression of the deeper emotions his art did not suffice. With all his merits, Reichardt cannot be classed among the great song-writers. His intentions and principles were excellent, but his melodic faculty was weak ; he was not an inspired com-

poser. He lacked ideas; and no music, be it a song or a symphony, can become immortal unless it embodies original ideas.

Zelter was, like Reichardt, a personal friend of Goethe. The cordiality of their relations is attested by the number of letters exchanged between them, making a collection of six printed volumes. Goethe confessed that some of Zelter's settings of his poems had an "indescribable charm" for him, and he wrote to the composer: "I may say that your melodies have given birth to many a poem in my mind." Goethe's admiration, however, counts for little; that he had no real appreciation of good music is proved by this fact alone, that he preferred the commonplace settings of his poems by Zelter and Reichardt, not only to Beethoven's, but even to Schubert's. It is, indeed, likely that the chief reason why Goethe liked Zelter's settings of his poems was that they were simple and did not distract attention from his poems; whereas in Schubert the poem becomes in importance secondary to the music. Zelter's merits lay in his choice of good poems and in carefully fitting together the melodic and the word accents. But he had no inspiration, lacked melodic and harmonic ideas, and, therefore, was not able to write any songs that have more than a historic interest to posterity.

Zumsteeg won the admiration of a much better judge of music than Goethe, namely, of Schubert himself. Spaun relates in his reminiscences that Schubert as a boy was deeply affected by these songs and "declared he could revel in them day after day." He used Zumsteeg as a model when he wrote his first songs; but soon went far beyond him, because he had genius and Zumsteeg only talent. Zumsteeg ranks as the earliest ballad composer of distinction; and Schubert followed him, for awhile, in this direction.

SPOHR, MARSCHNER, AND WEBER

The three masters grouped together in this section were born shortly before Schubert, and all but one (Weber) survived him. They occupy a much higher rank in the world of music than the men considered in the preceding section; yet they, too, though they might have profited by Schubert's example, did not contribute anything of permanent value to the world's treasures of songs. They were opera composers who, like Mozart, reserved their best ideas for their big stage works, their *Lieder* being little more than chips from their workshops. Ludwig Spohr (1784–1859) wrote eleven operas, one of which, *Faust*, held the stage till Gounod's

masterwork displaced it; his *Jessonda* is still sung in Germany occasionally; whereas his songs, of which about a dozen books of half-a-dozen each were issued, are not reprinted in the popular editions of our time—which shows that they have become obsolete.

Heinrich Marschner (1795–1861) published about twenty sets of songs and half as many sets of male choruses; but these, too, are obsolete, and he is remembered chiefly as a connecting link between Weber and Wagner. His best opera, *Hans Heiling*, which still enjoys about fifty performances a year in Germany, unmistakably influenced Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*.

Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826) wrote ten operas and ninety *Lieder*, ballads, and romances for one or two voices, besides a number of part-songs and cantatas. At the suggestion of Vogler he studied the songs of the people, and this, in the opinion of Dr. Spitta,* "enabled him to hit off the characteristic tone of the *Volkslied* as nobody had done before him." This may be true, but I have not been able to find among these songs one that equals the best real folk-

* Spitta's article on Weber in Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. iv., pp. 421–423, gives the best and most detailed account of Weber's *Lieder* that I know of. See, also, Reismann, *Gesch. d. deutschen Liedes*, pp. 166 and 216, and R. Wagner, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. iii., pp. 320–324.

songs, or the best of the melodies in the folk style which Weber created for his operas. He is, therefore, himself to blame for the comparative neglect which has overtaken his *Lieder*. Max Maria von Weber declares, in the biography of his father (vol. i., p. 189), that these songs will be rescued from their temporary oblivion when the world tires of the overladen and morbid products of modern composers and returns to the simplicity and greatness of true art. But this is nonsense. Weber's songs, on the whole, are less dry and trivial than those of Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven; not a few interesting details in them might be pointed out (as in the *Liebesgruss aus der Ferne*, which recalls *Euryanthe*); but they are not songs to be placed on the same shelf with those of Schubert, Schumann, Franz, and other modern masters. The fact that many of them were written with guitar accompaniment is significant.*

* That Weber's songs, while not as popular as formerly, have not become obsolete in Germany, is proved by the fact that the best of them are still printed in the popular editions of Peters, Litolff, and Breitkopf & Härtel. A complete edition, in two volumes, is issued by Schlesinger of Berlin. The patriotic or military songs, like the *Schwertlied*, set to Körner's last poem, are on the whole the most successful. The *Wiegenlied* foreshadows Mendelssohn.

III

Schubert

HAD it not been for a lucky occurrence—the marriage of a peasant's son, a humble Austrian schoolmaster named Franz Schubert, to a young Silesian woman named Elizabeth Fitz, who was in domestic service in Vienna as a cook (like Beethoven's mother)—it is probable that the art-song would have languished for many more years—possibly to our own day—in the subordinate position in which the various composers, discussed in the preceding pages, had left it. The same result would have followed if this union had not proved remarkably prolific; for Franz Peter Schubert was the thirteenth of fourteen children born to his mother. The date of his birth was January 31, 1797, and he was the only one of the famous Viennese school of composers (including Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven) who was born in Vienna. His mother died when he was fifteen, and his father took another wife, by whom he had five more children, three of whom grew up; while of the

fourteen by the first marriage five survived, leaving eight mouths to provide for, besides the father and mother.

To the present day schoolmasters are shamefully underpaid in most European countries, and it is needless to say that Franz Schubert's large family did not revel in wealth, his annual income being, in fact, only $175! From the cradle to the grave poverty was the companion of the greatest of all song-writers; but though little Franz often went hungry and cold, this did not prevent his musical genius from budding at an early age. Where he got that gift is as great a mystery as the origin of genius is in general. Nothing is said of his mother having been musical, and his father's accomplishments in this line cannot have been remarkable, inasmuch as, in playing the violoncello parts in quartets at home he sometimes made mistakes, unconsciously and repeatedly, until little Franz, who had the viola part, suggested timidly to his "Herr Vater" that "something must be wrong."

As a boy of eleven Schubert sang soprano solos and played the violin in the parish choir, and four months before he reached his twelfth year he entered the *Convict*, or Imperial school, in which boys were trained for the Court-chapel. Here he remained five years and re-

ceived many of the musical impressions which helped to form his taste. The boys had formed a small orchestra, which he joined as one of the violinists. His playing attracted attention at once, and before he was fourteen years old he was occasionally called upon to take the place of the absent conductor. Apart from these hours of music, life in the *Convict* was not particularly pleasant. The hungry boys never had enough to eat, and the room in which they had to practise was cruelly cold in winter. "You know from experience," Franz wrote to his brother in 1812, "that a fellow would like to eat a roll or an apple or two, once in a while; all the more if, after a poor dinner, he has to wait eight and a half hours for a wretched supper." He then begs for an occasional penny, and signs himself "your loving, poor, hopeful, and once more poor brother Franz."

Music-paper was another thing for which poor Franz would have had to go hungry, had it not been for the kind aid of a friend. Before leaving home Franz had already written songs and instrumental pieces, which, however, he destroyed as being mere experiments. In the *Convict* he blushingly confessed to one of the older boys, named Spaun, that he had already composed a good deal, and that he would like to write music every day if he could afford to

buy the paper. Spaun took pity on him and supplied him with what he needed. From that time on his demands in this direction were enormous. In the eighteen years from 1810 to 1828 he wrote at least 1,200 compositions, in all departments of music.*

Shortly before Schubert reached his seventeenth year his voice changed, and he left the *Convict* to return to his father's house. His brother Ferdinand declared that Franz was three times summoned to enlist in the army,

* The list of Schubert's compositions given by the late Sir George Grove in his *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (vol. iii., pp. 371–381) is now superseded by the table of contents of the complete edition of Schubert's works issued by Breitkopf & Härtel. Grove's article on Schubert, which takes up sixty-two pages (double columns) of his *Dictionary*, remains, however, the most complete biography now in existence in any language, and will probably remain so until the appearance of the great work on which Max Friedländer is engaged, and some of the material for which has been "printed as manuscript," as the Germans say. The scant sources of information on which any biography of Schubert must be based are given by Grove (p. 370) and Friedländer, and need not be repeated here. To their lists should, however, be added an excellent little biography by Niggli, in the Reclam edition. I may also state that Spaun's *Erinnerungen*, which were accessible to Grove, Kreissle, and Niggli only in manuscript, are now printed in La Mara's *Classisches und Romantisches aus der Tonwelt.* An admirably written short sketch of Schubert by John Fiske is incorporated in Professor Paine's *Famous Composers and Their Works;* another one, in Elson's *History of German Song.*

and that it was to escape military service that he decided to become a teacher in his father's school. Others have conjectured that it was his father who urged him to become a teacher rather than a professional musician. However that may be, it is obvious that a person who, as early as the age of eleven, was referred to as "a small boy in spectacles," would not have made a good soldier; and it certainly would have been a crime to expose such a genius to bullets. So, for three years, young Franz drilled the alphabet into the heads of boys and girls; many of them no doubt dense enough, for he often lost his patience and did not hesitate, on occasion, to box a dunce's ears.

It seems almost incredible that amid this exhausting drudgery, which would have used up all the energy of an ordinary individual, Schubert should have found time and inclination to compose a vast amount of music. In the year 1815 he wrote as many as one hundred and thirty-seven songs, besides a large number of instrumental works and several operettas. The songs included the immortal *Erlking*, *Heidenröslein*, *Schäfer's Klagelied* and *Rastlose Liebe*. That a mind capable of creating such works of genius should have at last found the drudgery of teaching reading and writing insupportable, is not strange. In the spring of

1816 we accordingly find him applying for the position of teacher in a new music school at Laibach, but he did not get it. The same result attended several other attempts to secure positions, which he made in later years; and perhaps it was just as well that he always failed. He disliked teaching of any kind, and, like most men of genius, was unsuited for any systematic, practical work. He was, in truth, a born Bohemian; and as a Bohemian he spent the rest of his short life without any home of his own, but living with his friends and boon companions, some of whom assisted him, while he, in turn, shared with them his scant earnings.

One of these friends, a university student named Franz von Schober, appeared on the scene at the most opportune time. Having heard some of Schubert's songs, he was so delighted that he at once took steps to make his acquaintance; and finding him overwhelmed with distasteful school-work, he generously offered him one of his rooms and otherwise helped him, so as to enable him to devote more of his time and energy to composition. For a few years (1819–1821) Schubert roomed with another friend, the poet Mayrhofer, returning later to Schober, whose chum he remained during the greater part of his life. For whatever these friends and others may have done for him, he

has repaid them a hundredfold by preserving for all time their names, and, in the case of Mayrhofer and others, a number of poems which would have been consigned to oblivion long ago but for the music set to them by Schubert. Some of them, indeed, would never have been written but for the stimulating influence of the composer on the poet.

The Bohemian life which Schubert enjoyed doubtless had its drawbacks. His friends were, like himself, mostly young bachelors who, having no home, spent their evenings in taverns. Schubert liked a good glass of wine, and he was fond of the society of these young men. Thus he was tempted to give up to conviviality many a night that consideration for his health should have induced him to spend in bed. There is no evidence, however, that he was wont to indulge to excess; indeed, we know from one of his letters (Kreissle, p. 320) that he left a "reading club" when it degenerated into a beer-and-sausage club. The chief harm that came to him from his boon companions was that while some of them were ready to help him, others made unscrupulous use of his liberality when he happened to have a few florins, and this helped to keep his purse always empty. In money matters he was, like Wagner, a child; squandering one moment, starving the next.

In the last year of his life, when his first and only concert had yielded him $160, he quite lost his head, paying five florins to hear Paganini and then going again because he wished to treat his friend, Bauernfeld. This recklessness and excessive conviviality were, however, his only faults—faults which too often go hand in hand with the artistic temperament.

Besides allowing him plenty of time for composing, the unfettered life he led had other advantages to counterbalance the drawbacks mentioned. Musicians are apt to flock together and talk shop and scandal by the hour; but among Schubert's boon companions there were only a few musicians, the others being officials, artists, and poets, whose varied conversation could not fail to widen the horizon of his thoughts. He was known by the nickname of "Canevas" because it was his habit, whenever a stranger was introduced to the circle, of asking "Kann er was?" ("Can he do anything?"). Nor were these meetings entirely given up to carousing. Reading or declaiming was often in order; and many of Schubert's new songs were sung for the first time on these occasions. And although the informal club was not a musical one, and Schubert was naturally of a retiring, timid disposition, nevertheless he was the centre of it, and the meetings went by the name of "Schuber-

tiads." These Schubertiads were sometimes held at the residences of the members or their friends. Occasionally the ladies were invited, and there was dancing as well as singing, Schubert sitting at the piano and improvising those lovely valses and other dance-pieces of which many were afterward written down. One evening a policeman entered and commanded the dancing to stop because it was Lent—greatly to the annoyance of Schubert, who exclaimed: "They do that just to spite me, because they know how I love to improvise dance music."

Up to this time Schubert had been compelled to sing his own songs, and he had only a "composer's voice." One of his great desires was to make the acquaintance of the famous opera singer Johann Michael Vogl. Schober, who knew him, accordingly tried to interest him in Schubert by telling him in glowing words about the beauty of his friend's compositions. Vogl answered that he had often heard of such prodigies, but had always been disappointed; and that he was tired of music anyway and wished to be left alone. But Schober did not leave him alone, and finally persuaded him to go with him to his rooms. Schubert was there, and after an introduction, he sat at the piano and played while Vogl sang several of his songs. "Not bad," the tenor exclaimed dryly, after the first

song (*Augenlied*). Other songs, including *Ganymed* and *Des Schäfer's Klage*, seemed to please him more; but he went home without saying much or promising to call again. On going out, however, he tapped the young man on the shoulder and exclaimed: "There is stuff in you, but not enough of the comedian, the charlatan; you squander your fine thoughts without making the most of them." But the songs haunted his memory; he soon called again, sang more of them, and ere long found himself one of the most ardent admirers of this young genius, whose music had cured him of "that tired feeling," and awakened in him a new interest in art.

Vogl was not free from the faults of opera singers. When he told Schubert at their first meeting that there was "not enough of the comedian, the charlatan" in him, he meant that Schubert did not sufficiently embellish his songs for the sake of tickling the ears of his hearers. He himself did not hesitate, in singing these chaste songs, to hang operatic tinsel around them—with the best of intentions. Nor did he hesitate to slightly alter or to transpose the songs. But the statement made by Kreissle that Vogl influenced the style of Schubert's compositions is emphatically denied by Spaun. "No one," he wrote in some biographic memo-

randa made for his family in 1864, "ever had the slightest influence on his method of composing, though attempts may have been made. At the utmost he made concessions to the range of Vogl's voice, but even that seldom and unwillingly." In all other respects Vogl's influence on Schubert can only have been good. He was a man of general culture and wide reading, and he must have called his friend's attention to many a fine poem. In all probability, the two men had many interesting discussions on the subject of the relations of poetry and music. Perhaps the following reflection which Vogl wrote into his diary is an echo of these discussions:

"Nothing shows so plainly the need of a good school of singing as Schubert's songs. Otherwise, what an enormous and universal effect must have been produced throughout the world, wherever the German language is understood, by these truly divine inspirations, these utterances of a musical clairvoyance. How many would have comprehended, probably for the first time, the meaning of such expressions as 'speech and poetry in music,' 'words in harmony,' 'ideas clothed in music,' etc., and would have learned that the finest poems of our greatest poets may be enhanced, and even transcended, when translated into musical language."

The French sneer, *bête comme un tenor*, obviously did not apply to the man who wrote this, and Schubert was lucky in having such a rare

bird to sing his songs. Vogl was in great demand in social circles, and he was thus in a position, which he put to the best use, of making the public at large acquainted with these new songs. Schubert often accompanied him on the piano, and we may judge of the impression on their lucky hearers from a sentence in a letter written by him in 1825, to his brother Ferdinand: "The manner in which Vogl sings and I accompany, so that we seem to be *one* on such occasions, is to these people something new and unheard of." In another letter of the same year he writes to his parents that after he had played a movement from one of his sonatas some of the hearers assured him that under his fingers the keys sang like voices; "which, if true, makes me very glad," he adds with characteristic modesty.

From one point of view it was lucky for Schubert that he was modest, for apart from the admiration of his friends there was little in his experiences to encourage vanity. Spaun relates that whenever Vogl or Schönstein* sang

* Baron von Schönstein was another singer who introduced Schubert's songs in the higher social circles. To him the *Müllerlieder* and other famous songs are dedicated; and Schubert wrote in one of his letters: "I am always delighted to hear Baron Schönstein sing." Liszt heard him in 1838, and wrote in the *Gazette Musicale* that Schubert's songs, as sung by the baron, had often moved

Schubert's *Lieder* at social gatherings they were overwhelmed with applause and thanks; "but nobody took the least notice of the modest musician who had created these splendid melodies. He was so accustomed to this neglect that it did not trouble him in the least." It is, indeed, related that on one occasion, to avoid the attentions of the guests, he made his escape by a back stairway.*

From another point of view this modesty and indifference to praise proved a disadvantage.

> Bescheidenheit ist eine Zier,
> Doch kommt man weiter ohne ihr,

as a German humorist has remarked. A little more pride and "push" would have been of great benefit to Schubert. Among those who took advantage of his diffidence and good nature were the publishers. For years they refused to have anything to do with his songs, notwithstanding the enthusiasm they had

him to tears. He praised Schönstein for allowing himself to be swayed by his emotions without thinking of the public, and referred to Schubert as "the most poetic musician that ever was." But this was ten years after Schubert's death. It was the same year that Schumann began to proclaim the genius of Schubert in his musical journal, the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*.

* Sir George Grove has truly said that Schubert "was one of the very few musicians who did not behave as if he thought himself the greatest man in the world."

aroused in private circles; and subsequently they pinned him down to the lowest terms, even to the last year of his life. The *Erlking* was composed in 1818. Five years later it was offered to several publishers, who refused to print it even without a royalty. Some of Schubert's friends thereupon advanced the necessary funds, the song was printed—the first of his compositions to get into type—and in nine months 800 copies of it were sold, the publisher, Diabelli, receiving one-half of the proceeds. Eleven other songs were now issued in rapid succession, and proved so successful that the shrewd publisher offered 800 florins for the copyright of the twelve, and Schubert was unwise enough to accept that sum. One of these songs alone, the *Wanderer*, yielded to the publishers 27,000 florins in the years 1822–1861.

Notwithstanding the success of this first venture, the publishers were slow in assuming further risks. Kreissle has printed a number of letters from them which must have caused Schubert many a pang of disappointment. One publisher is too busy with Kalkbrenner's works; another is afraid to risk anything on the efforts of a "young and little-known" composer; a third offers to print some of his pieces "on commission;" and all of them, to the end of his life, profess to find his terms too high. He was

glad to accept from $15 down to $2 for the exclusive rights to a song, and sometimes much less. Sir George Grove was told by Mr. Barry (who had it from Lachner himself) that in the last year of his life Schubert sent Lachner to Hasslinger with the manuscripts of six of the immortal *Winterreise* songs and brought back a florin apiece for them—the florin being worth at that time twenty cents!

Attempts made by Schubert during the last three years of his life to interest foreign publishers—many of whom have since earned fortunes by the sale of these same songs—proved futile. Three weeks before his death he received a letter from Schott's Sons regretting that some of his pieces which had been sent to Paris had been found "too difficult for such trifles." These "trifles" were the immortal and epoch-making Impromptus, the progenitors of the short pieces which are characteristic of the romantic school.

It would be unfair, however, to put too much blame on the publishers. They were but human, like their companions. If, as Kreissle remarks, the request, "do not make your compositions too difficult to play or to understand," runs like red thread through all the letters from publishers, there were reasons for this. Schubert, like all great geniuses, was in advance of his time.

If the Viennese who heard Vogl or Schönstein sing and Schubert play had no difficulty in understanding his music, it was otherwise with the public at large, which was not thus favored. Even in Vienna the critics blundered in censuring Schubert for those very modulations and other original features which we now admire most.* From a practical point of view Vogl was right when he said that Schubert was "not enough of a charlatan and a comedian." He wrote to please himself, not the public, and he had to suffer, in consequence, like other geniuses before and after him. He would sometimes say jokingly that the state ought to support him, in order that he might devote himself to composition, free from all care. Richard Wagner often said the same thing about himself seriously; and when we consider what big sums European governments expend on the training of mediocrities in music schools, as well as on the performance of operas (by composers who are usually allowed to starve), this demand seems the most rational thing in the world. But how could the government know that

* One specimen must suffice. The critic of the *Allgemeine Musik Zeitung* (March 21, 1821) wrote regarding the *Geisterchor* that it was "recognized by the public as a farrago of musical modulations and deviations from the rules; without sense, order, or meaning."

Schubert was a genius when the professional musicians were so obtuse and indifferent? Three years before Schubert's death, when the list of his compositions was near one thousand, Schober wrote:

"So the *Müllerlieder*, too, have failed to make a sensation! These curs have no feelings or judgment of their own, but follow blindly where others lead. What you need is a few critics, with big drums, to proclaim your name incessantly. I have known insignificant persons who were thrust into fame by this method; why should it not be employed in the case of one like you, who deserve it in the highest degree?"

Notwithstanding his aversion to teaching, which might have paid for his bread and butter (while diminishing the freshness of his compositions), Schubert accepted an invitation in 1818 to go with the family of Count Johann Carl Esterhazy to his country estate at Zélesz, in Hungary, to teach his wife and two daughters. He received forty cents per lesson, had plenty of time to compose, and his sojourn in the country—which was repeated in 1824—was of benefit to his art as well as to his health; it made him acquainted with Hungarian folk-music, traces of which occur in some of his works from this time on.

As no man's life—particularly no musician's life—seems complete without at least one love-affair, imaginative historians, biographers, and

newspaper writers have built up an elaborate romance, in which Schubert is represented as having been deeply in love with Caroline, the younger daughter of Count Esterhazy, and heart-broken because he could not marry her. The basis for this romance is the assertion made by Kreissle (who gives no authority for it) that the Countess once jokingly reproached Schubert for not having dedicated anything to her, whereupon he replied: "Why should I? Is not everything I write dedicated to you?" But a gallant teacher might easily say such a thing to a pretty pupil without being frantically in love with her. The facts that Schubert was a penniless music-teacher, and that the Esterhazys, in their silly "aristocratic" pride, did not invite him to their table, but made him eat with the servants * (like Mozart in Salzburg), could not, of course, have prevented him from falling in love with his pupil. But during the first sojourn at the Esterhazy castle Caroline was only twelve years old, and during the second, when she was eighteen, there is evidence that, though he may have admired her, he cannot have been violently in love with

* See Friedländer's *Beiträge zu einer Schubert Biographie* and *Deutsche Rundschau*, vol. 23, No. 5, for detailed evidence on all these points.

her. In letters of this period he bewails his exile from Vienna and regrets that he allowed himself a second time to be beguiled to the Hungarian castle, where, he adds, "there is not a single person with whom I can exchange a sensible word." Such is not the attitude and language of a lover. There is also a poem by Schubert's friend Bauernfeld, which declares that, though the composer was in love with the countess, he soon transferred his affection to another:

> Verliebt war Schubert; der Schülerin
> Galt's, einer der jungen Comptessen,
> Doch gab er sich einer—ganz Andern hin,
> Um—die Andere zu vergessen.

If further proof were needed, it would be found in a confession made by Schubert one day to Hüttenbrenner, who asked him if he had ever been in love. Schubert replied that he had loved one girl dearly, and for three years had hoped to marry her, but had been obliged to give her up because he was unable to secure a remunerative position. This girl was not pretty; her face was covered with smallpox marks, and she was not a countess, but the daughter of a schoolmaster. We know from several passages in Schubert's letters that he had an eye for beauty in women; but apart

from this story of the schoolmaster's daughter there is no evidence that he ever was really in love; certainly there is no particle of evidence for the current belief, to which Rowbotham has given the most extravagant expression, that "the image of Caroline Esterhazy was ever present in his mind to cheer him in his lonely life and to offer him, if not the comfort of hope, at least the consolation of delightful woe."

No; the tragedy of Schubert's life does not lie in unrequited passion; it lies in his early death and the thought that it might have been so easily prevented. All that was needed to keep him alive was a little money to enable him to take another vacation. He was a great lover of nature, but, apart from his two summers with the Esterhazys, there were only three occasions in his life when he was able to make a trip—to Salzburg and the Tyrolean Mountains; perhaps even these not being at his own expense. The letters written on these excursions—when he played and Vogl sang to the delight of their hosts—abound in enthusiastic references to the fine scenery, and give frequent evidence of the bracing effects of the country air on his body and mind. If he could have spent another summer in these regions his life might have been spared. Several extant letters by him

and others prove that he had planned another trip and that nothing but lack of funds prevented him from leaving Vienna during the unhealthy months. He needed an outing more than ever, for he had been suffering for some time from persistent headaches and giddiness. Unable to leave the city, he changed his residence, by the doctor's advice, to a new house occupied by his brother Ferdinand, in a suburb whence he would be able to get away more easily from the city on his afternoon walks. Probably the water supplied to this house was bad, for Schubert at once got worse. In October he went to Eisenstadt for three days and was much better. Returning to the city the unfavorable symptoms returned, the doctors diagnosed typhoid fever, and he died a few days later—November 19, 1828—a victim of poverty and lack of appreciation.

His last hours were agonizing to his brother. Franz fancied, in the delirium of his fever, that he had been put in a corner under the earth, and he asked piteously: "Don't I deserve a place above ground?" Ferdinand assured him he was in his own room, but Franz declared: "No, that is not so; Beethoven is not here." A few hours later he clutched at the wall and exclaimed: "Here, here is my end." They were his last words. And thus passed away a genius

of whom Grove has said truly and pathetically: "There never has been one like him and there never will be another."

His worldly possessions at the time of his death were officially valued at about twelve dollars. They included piles of musical manuscripts worth more than their weight in gold; but no one knew it, till Schumann came across them ten years later and gave some of them to the astonished world.

Money, money alone, was needed to prolong the life of Schubert, the most spontaneous and divinely inspired of all musicians. An extra drop of bitterness is added to our sorrow over his untimely death by the thought that there was a man in Vienna who might have saved him had he known him sooner. There can be no doubt that if Beethoven had lived another year the authority of his name and the active interest he would certainly have manifested in Schubert would have brought the young song-writer the fame and the consideration which would have enabled him to support himself. But it was one of the links in the long chain of Schubert's misfortunes that, although Beethoven lived in the same city thirty years, he did not, until a few months before his death, discover Schubert's genius.

When he was already too ill to continue com-

posing, Schindler brought him about sixty of Schubert's songs by way of diversion and with the object of making him acquainted with the young man's work. Beethoven was amazed and delighted with these songs. For several days he had them constantly in hand and exclaimed repeatedly: "Truly, Schubert has the divine spark." He now was eager to see also the operas and piano-forte works, but his illness prevented him, and he could only express regrets at not having known Schubert sooner. It is probable that his enthusiastic praise stimulated Schubert, who worshipped him, to those supreme efforts which enabled him to write his greatest works after this time; but it was too late to derive much worldly benefit from Beethoven's recommendation, for he followed him into the grave eighteen months later. Beethoven was, as we have seen, in his mind in the delirium of his fever, not long before the end, and it was his fervent wish that he might be buried near that master, which wish was carried out through the self-denial of his brother Ferdinand, who secured a place for him only three graves removed from Beethoven's.

In view of Schubert's great admiration for Beethoven it is remarkable that his genius was so little dominated by that master and that he manifested such striking originality in all de-

partments of music. The method of workmanship of these two composers, also, was utterly dissimilar. Beethoven began, as a rule, with the germ of a musical thought, often crude and even commonplace, which he jotted down on music-paper, subsequently altering it—in some cases a dozen times or oftener—till at last it assumed the finished form we admire; whereas Schubert, as a rule, improvised his compositions, without any preliminary sketches. When composing, he often seemed like one in a trance. Vogl, in a page of his diary already referred to, as well as in a letter to Stadler, refers to Schubert's compositions as works produced in a state resembling clairvoyance or somnambulism; and other friends, like Schönstein and Schober, who had occasion to observe him in moments of creativeness, received the same impression. As Spaun writes:

"Those who were intimately acquainted with him knew how deeply he was affected by his creations and how he gave birth to them in pain. No one who ever saw him on a forenoon while he was composing, with glowing face and sparkling eyes, his very speech changed, resembling a somnambulist, will ever forget the impression. How, indeed, could he have written these songs without being stirred in his inmost soul! In the afternoon, to be sure, he was different; but he was tender and deep in his feelings, only he did not like to expose them, but preferred to keep them locked up within."

Sir George Grove, who has shown a keener and deeper appreciation of Schubert's genius than any other Englishman, has well remarked :

"In hearing Schubert's compositions it is often as if one were brought more immediately and closely into contact with music itself than is the case in the works of others ; as if in his pieces the stream from the great heavenly reservoir were dashing over us, or flowing through us, more directly, with less admixture of any medium or channel, than it does in those of any other writer. . . . No sketches, no delay, no anxious period of preparation, no revision appear to have been necessary. He had but to read the poem, to surrender himself to the torrent, and to put down what was given him to say, as it rushed through his mind."

Instances will be given presently of the startling suddenness with which the music suitable to a poem often sprang up in his mind full-fledged, like love at first sight. He composed as a bird sings in spring, or as a well gushes from a mountain side, simply because he could not help it. Spaun relates that Schubert, when he slept in his room, often kept his spectacles on his nose all night and as soon as he woke up, without waiting to dress, sat down and wrote the loveliest songs. Nothing could stop the flow of his inspiration. It is related by Randhartinger that one day he dashed down the highly dramatic song *The Dwarf*, at a publisher's request, without having seen the poem

before and without finding it necessary to interrupt, while he was writing it, a conversation he was engaged in. Even illness did not annihilate his creative activity. Some of the *Müller-lieder* were composed in a hospital. He wrote simply for the pleasure of writing, and the fact that he had to wait seven years before any of his songs were printed did not in the least check his creativeness. When Hiller once asked him whether he wrote much, he replied: "I compose every morning; and when one piece is done I begin another;" and Lachner relates that after he had sung or played a new composition he would often put it away and never think of it again.

Not less astounding than his spontaneity was his fertility, especially in his earlier years. In 1815, at the age of eighteen, he wrote one hundred and forty-four songs, which fill up two volumes of the ten in the Breitkopf & Härtel complete edition! The number for the following year was one hundred and ten. Six of the fine *Winterreise* songs were written in one morning, and he is known to have set to music as many as eight poems in one day. Of his opera *Fierrabras* he composed three hundred manuscript pages in a week, a thousand pages in four months, with a number of songs and piano-forte pieces thrown in.

One reason why Schubert's friends compared him to a somnambulist was that he did not always remember in his normal condition what he had written while in the state of "clairvoyance." On one occasion he took some new songs for inspection to Vogl. Happening to be busy the tenor laid them aside. Examining them subsequently, he came across one which he liked particularly, but, as it was in an inconvenient key, he had it transposed. A fortnight later when Schubert made another call, Vogl placed this copy before him and sang it. The composer played the piano part, and at the end exclaimed: "Look here! That's not a bad song! Whose is it?"

While Schubert was undoubtedly the most spontaneous of all musicians, the notion that he practically shook his compositions from his sleeves and never paid any further attention to them, can no longer be upheld. The painstaking researches of Friedländer and Mandyczewski have shown that he resorted to revision and filing much more frequently than has been supposed. In the ten volumes of Breitkopf & Härtel's complete edition there are six hundred and three songs, and among them no fewer than fifty-two which appear in two versions. Two others were taken up three times, and three—including *The Trout*

and *The Erlking*—four times. Most of the second and third versions are of songs written before his twentieth year. But in some cases he rewrote songs many years after their first composition; *Nur wer die Sehnsucht Kennt* (*Mignon*), for instance, of which the first version is dated 1815, the last 1827. In the later versions, and when the songs were sent to the printer, he also carefully revised the expression marks.*

* In Max Friedländer's "Supplement" to the Peters edition of Schubert's songs (7 vols., including 443 songs), and in Eusebius Mandyczewski's "Revisions-bericht" accompanying the Breitkopf & Härtel edition (10 vols., 603 songs) the changes made by Schubert in the different versions are carefully noted, and we get from these volumes an insight into the workshop of his genius, as we do into Beethoven's from the "sketches" published by Nottebohm. But the critical labors of these editors do not end there. They have done an inestimable service to the world by restoring the original text of many of the songs. Poor Schubert was pursued by his misfortunes, even after his death. The chaste simplicity of his melodies and the originality of his harmonies were not appreciated by his contemporaries as they are now. Even during his lifetime his friend, Vogl, as we have seen, used to "adorn" his songs with operatic embellishments, following the custom of the time, and convinced that he was doing him a good service. After Schubert's death some publishers had the unhappy thought of printing the songs with these stupid embellishments; and thus, for half a century or more, the grossest mistakes remained in the various printed editions of even the most famous of the songs. Nor were the publishers content with the superadded operatic frills and furbelows. They marred many of the songs by

Composers differ greatly in regard to the maturing of their genius. At an age (thirty-one) corresponding to that at which Schubert died, Beethoven had conceived only the first two of his symphonies; which might almost have been written by Mozart, so little is there in them of the true Beethoven. Wagner, at the corresponding age, had written only the least Wag-

manufactured introductory bars, sometimes amazingly trivial and inane. Nay, they did not hesitate, with a view of rendering the songs more palatable to the public, to erase some of Schubert's finest nuances in melody or accompaniment; or to change his bold, original harmonies to conventional chords. Misprints, carefully reproduced, added to the confusion. Many of the songs, furthermore, were, to their detriment, transposed to other keys. It is true that Schubert was less particular in this matter than his successor, Robert Franz; being willing to allow a temporary transposition in order to accommodate a singer. Yet he had his reasons for writing a song in this or that key, and whenever a publisher begged him to choose an easier one, with fewer flats or sharps, he used to reply (as Spaun informs us) that he could not write otherwise, and that those who could not play his piano parts as he had written them, might as well leave them alone.

For detailed information on all these points see No. 43 of Breitkopf & Härtel's *Mittheilungen*, and an article by Friedländer on "Fälschungen in Schubert's Liedern," in Chrysander's *Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft*, 1893, pp. 166–185. Those who can read French, but not German, will find much pertinent information, together with a chronological list of Schubert's 603 songs (German and French titles), in *Les Lieder de Franz Schubert*, by Henri de Curzon, Paris, 1899, pp. 112.

nerian of his works, up to *Rienzi* and the *Flying Dutchman*. But Schubert wrote original and immortal compositions as a mere boy of seventeen and eighteen, including *Margaret at the Spinning Wheel*, the *Rose on the Heath*, the *Wanderer's Night Song*, and the *Erlking*. He began to write, as we have seen, several years sooner. His first efforts were destroyed, the earliest surviving song being dated March 30, 1811. It is entitled *Hagar's Lament*, and as Schubert was only fourteen when he wrote it, we are not surprised to find it a close imitation of the song on the same theme written by the Stuttgart composer Zumsteeg, whom (as we have already said) he admired greatly. Like many of the earlier songs (and not a few of the later ones), it is very long—fifteen printed pages—while frequent changes of tempo and rhythm, in which he follows Zumsteeg, break it up into a dozen movements. Soon, however, he learned to use his own wings, and his flights grew bolder and bolder. A few sketches have been preserved which show that at this early period—the "experimental years"—he used to jot down the melody, with the mere outlines of the piano part, and then rewrite and elaborate the whole.

There are two ways of setting a poem to music. One consists in adapting to the first stanza or strophe of the poem a melody and ac-

companiment which are repeated unchanged in all the other stanzas, though there may be a dozen or more of them. This is called a strophic song—the typical folk-song. In the other kind, which the Germans call a *durch-componirtes Lied*, the music is "composed through"; that is, while usually repeating the same music in the main, the composer makes more or less important changes in the melody or accompaniment, accordingly as the mood of the poem changes in the several stanzas.

Among the early songs of Schubert we find good examples of both these kinds, but as the through-composed song is the more artistic, he favors that from the beginning. The first of his really great songs is of this kind. It is the well-known *Margaret at the Spinning Wheel* (dated October, 1814, and the thirty-first of the preserved songs). Here we already find Schubert's spontaneous flow of melody, with some of his harmonic peculiarities; while the whirling, monotonous figure of the accompaniment picturesquely suggests the motion of the wheel, dramatically interrupted by a few pensive chords at the words "And oh, his kiss!"—one of those strokes of genius with which Schubert was destined to show—like Wagner after him—how greatly the effect even of the best poem can be enhanced by sympathetic music.

Among the one hundred and forty-four songs of the year 1815 there are (besides other gems that I cannot stop to describe—like *Rastlose Liebe*,* Ossian songs, etc.,) two world-famed and perfect specimens of both the strophic and the through-composed kind—the exquisite *Rose on the Heather*, simple as a folk-song yet with the fragrance of individual genius, and the *Erlking*. The excellence of these songs is the more remarkable when contrasted with other songs of this year. They were written amid the drudgery of school teaching, and it is not surprising that most of them are mediocre, or worse. And yet, when I play them over and begin to wonder how a first-rate genius could have penned such stuff, nearly always I come across a few bars which change my question to "How could a mere boy have had such a happy thought?" The strangest thing about Schubert's genius is that even in his later years we often find the commonplace and the sublime side by side. But it must not be forgotten that the least interesting of his songs are still superior to most of the productions of his predecessors, be their names Reichardt and Zelter or Gluck, Haydn, Mozart,

* Bauernfeld relates regarding this song that when it was composed the paroxysm of inspiration was so fierce that Schubert spoke of it years afterward.

and Beethoven. He set the high-water mark so high that he himself could not always reach it.

The *Erlking* is probably the best known of all the Schubert songs, having long been a favorite not only of vocalists but of pianists too, in the masterly arrangement of Liszt* which always evokes unbounded enthusiasm. Luckily we know a good deal about this song. It was composed toward the close of the year 1815, and Spaun has told us how it happened:

"One afternoon I went with Mayrhofer to Schubert, who was living at that time with his father in the Himmelpfortgrunde. We found Schubert all aglow reading the *Erlking*

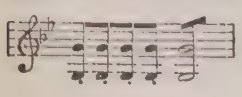
* Liszt showed his devotion to "the most poetic musician that ever was" by acts as well as in words. He transcribed no fewer than a hundred of the Schubert songs for the piano; and by playing them at his own concerts and enabling musicians who could not sing to play them at home, he did a great deal toward making them popular. In the second volume of her biography of Liszt (Englished by Miss Cowdery), Lina Ramann has an interesting chapter on this subject, in which she justly points out that Liszt really established a new branch of art when he made these song-transfers. The necessary alterations are mostly in the piano part and they are so much in touch with the original that the composer rarely suffers, while the transcription is in some cases even more beautiful than the original—in *Auf dem Wasser zu Singen*, for instance, the one song of Schubert's which seems to me better adapted for a piano piece than a *Lied*. Liszt's arrangements were received "with shouts of delight." He, like Schubert himself, knew how to make the piano "sing under his fingers."

aloud from a book. He walked up and down the room several times, book in hand, then suddenly sat down and, as fast as his pen could travel, put the splendid ballad on paper. As he had no piano, we hurried over to the *Convict*, and there the *Erlking* was sung the same evening and received with enthusiasm. The old court-organist Ruziczka then played it over himself, without the voice, in all parts carefully and appreciatively, and was deeply impressed by the composition. When some of those present objected to a dissonance that occurs repeatedly, Ruziczka struck those chords and explained how inevitable they seemed in view of the text, and how fine, and how happily they were resolved."

The reference is, of course, to the discords which are heard when the child, held in the arms of its father as he "rides through night and wind," expresses its fears of the Erlking, the forest-haunting goblin. "Inevitable," indeed, these dashing dissonances seem in this place, but they were a new thing in music, and it took the genius of Schubert to discover their inevitableness. To appreciate the innovation we have but to compare Schubert's *Erlking* with the earlier setting of Reichardt, in which one and the same commonplace melody is used for the speeches of father and son, as well as for the narrative. Schubert's whole atmosphere, on the contrary, is dramatic: the coaxing Erlking, the terrified child, the soothing father, have each a language of their own, different from the narrative. And how realistically the

piano impersonates the horse with those incessant galloping triplets! But the climax lies in the dissonances first referred to. Wagner himself in his mature years could not have built up a more ingenious dramatic climax than the eighteen-year-old Schubert did in this ballad of Goethe's. Note that the dissonance—C and D with E flat—first occurs (*forte*) when the child asks the father if he does not see the Erlking. The second time, when the child asks the father if he sees not the Erlking's daughters in their gloomy haunts, it is an interval higher—D, E, F; and finally, when the child cries, "My father, my father, he seizes me now!" we have a still higher and more shrill dissonance—E flat, F, G flat—sung and played fortissimo. The effect is thrilling.*

* While these subtleties were the product of instantaneous inspiration, other fine details were the result of reflection and revision. Thus the alluring, soothing love-song of the Erlking, "*Ich liebe dich, mich reizt deine schöne Gestalt,*" was originally marked *ff* in the manuscript, but Schubert subsequently changed it with a red pencil to *pp*, which is infinitely more appropriate and impressive. On the other hand, it is not true, as some have surmised, that the triplets in the piano part are an afterthought. The fact that one of the manuscripts of the *Erlking* (at the Berlin Royal Library) has

 in place of

Although the *Erlking* is No. 178 in the list of Schubert's songs and was written in 1815, it was not published till 1821, seven years before his death. Though he had already written four hundred songs at that date, the publishers would have nothing to do with any of them, refusing the *Erlking* on the ground that they "could not expect it to succeed, because the composer was unknown and the piano-forte part too difficult." It was then, as we have seen, brought out by subscription as opus 1. It had already been popular for some years in private circles, and the publication soon increased its vogue. From that time to the present all sorts of arrangements have been made of it. His own brother Ferdinand adapted it for solo voices, mixed chorus and orchestra, and Berlioz subsequently made an orchestral version. Hüttenbrenner

gave rise to this notion; but the evidence collected by Friedländer ("Die Erste Form des Erlkönigs" in Chrysander's *Vierteljahrsschrift*, 1887, pp. 122–128; see, also, Albert B. Bach's *The Art Ballad*, p. 107, for further evidence) leaves no doubt that the quavers represent a later version, not intended, however, by any means as an improvement on the more hurried and realistic triplets, but as a convenience. A son of the tenor Barth informed Friedländer that Schubert himself once accompanied this song for his father in quavers, and when asked why he did not use the triplets, replied, "I leave those to others, for me they are too difficult." It must be remembered that the pianos of that time did not have the perfect mechanism of ours.

went so far as to write an *Erlking Waltz*, which seems to have annoyed Schubert; though he himself used to amuse his friends by singing it through a comb in the most tragi-comic way. At other times he distributed the parts of the father, son, and Erlking; singing one himself while Vogl and some one else took the others.*

Among the gems of the year following the *Erlking* (1816) are the third version of Schiller's *The Maiden's Lament*—a gem of the romantic mood—and the world-famed *Wanderer*, one strophic, the other through-composed; both of them Schubert in every bar and far superior to any song composed before him. Like the *Erlking*, the *Wanderer* was written at one sitting, the reading of the poem having at once suggested the music. The passage beginning with the words, "Die Sonne dünkt mich hier so kalt" was adopted by Schubert in 1820 as the theme of the adagio in his C major fantasia for piano-forte.

* Besides Schubert's setting of the *Erlking* there are at least forty others; but the only one worthy of being named on the same day is Loewe's, which will be considered presently. An amusing story is told by Friedländer of a worthy musician (church-composer and Kapellmeister) named Franz Schubert, who appears to have been mistaken by some one for the composer of Schubert's *Erlking;* whereupon he wrote a letter to Härtel protesting indignantly against being insulted by having this bungling piece (*Machwerk*) attributed to his pen!

In some respects more wonderful even than any of the songs so far named is *Death and the Maiden*, of the following year (1817). No other *Lied* has thrilled me so often as this one; I know none which conjures up a sombre mood with such simple means. After the poor girl has begged the "skeleton man" to pass her by because she is so young, how full of gloomy foreboding are the two bars leading over to the second speaker — Death! And while he asks her in soothing tones not to dread him, since he has come not to punish, but to let her sleep gently in his arms, his monotonous, cavernous tones and the strange modulations tell us his real intentions. Did ever music in a major mood thus produce the effect of a weird minor? Schubert knew the charm of this song as well as any one. He knew, too, that it contained within its few bars the germs of melodies and harmonies capable of delightful expansion; and this task he fortunately undertook some years later, when he made this song the theme of the variations constituting the second movement of his D minor quartet—the most inspired set of variations in the whole range of music.*

* In my opinion Schubert is not only the greatest of all song-writers, but also superior to all other masters in chamber-music—in melodic fertility, harmonic originality, sensuous beauty of coloring, and appeal to the emotions. Epoch-making, also, are his

I may add that one of Schubert's own brothers committed the crime of cutting up the manuscript into about a dozen pieces, which were distributed among autograph fiends. Three of these fragments have been recovered, and on one of them was the date of the song, it having been one of Schubert's good habits to write down the day on which he completed a composition.

To the same year as *Death and the Maiden* belongs another of the most popular songs, *The Trout*, of which there are four versions. The first manuscript has a large blotch of ink over its first bars, and a few explanatory lines in

short pieces for piano-forte; the most idiomatic compositions for that instrument written before Chopin, and the forerunners of the various short pieces which characterize the romantic school. In these things, as in his modulations, Schubert is the father of the romantic school. His general rank in music is a much higher one than that usually assigned to him by historians. Rubinstein proclaimed him one of the three greatest of all masters. But I have no space to discuss this matter here. See my article on "Schubert's Rank as a Composer," in the Philadelphia *Étude*, May, 1900. In that article I also disposed of the ridiculous charge that Schubert was not a master of polyphony. In the whole range of musical biography there is not a more ludicrous and at the same time pathetic incident than the resolution of poor Schubert, only a few weeks before his death, to take lessons in counterpoint of Sechter. The "friends" who urged him to do this may perhaps be forgiven, since they had no way of hearing his instrumental works; but for modern writers to parrot their opinion is unpar-

Schubert's handwriting at the bottom of the page: "Just as I was about to hurriedly throw on the sand, being somewhat sleepy, I seized the inkstand and calmly emptied it. What a calamity!" On the next page he wrote: "Dearest friend! I am delighted to hear that you like my songs. As a proof of my sincere friendship I here send you another one, which I have just now written at Anselm Hüttenbrenner's, at midnight." This song, also, was used afterwards as a theme for variations, in the quintet, opus 114.

A composer's best songs are not always the most popular of them. In comparison with

donable. There are imitative passages in the chamber music and symphonies, and in many of the songs too (think, *e.g.*, of his *Weinen und Lachen*, *An die Thüren will ich schleichen*, the melodious bass in *Aufenthalt*, etc.) which show that Schubert's genius taught him more about counterpoint, so far as it has any musical value, than a thousand Sechters could have taught him. As Dr. Dvořák remarked in an article which I helped him to write for the *Century Magazine* (July, 1894), "though Schubert's polyphony be different from Bach's or Beethoven's, it is none the less admirable." If Schubert had added Bach's polyphony to his own qualities he would have been like Robert Franz. But is Franz a greater song-writer than Schubert because he is usually polyphonic? Dr. Riemann has some excellent remarks on contrapuntal accompaniments in Schubert and others in his *Katechismus der Gesangscomposition* (pp. 81, 87, 88, 91), a book which must be warmly commended to all who wish to write songs or study their anatomical structure.

many other *Lieder*, *The Trout* has enjoyed more vogue than it deserves, and the same is true of some other songs. Mr. Elson had good reasons for writing in 1888 that Schubert's songs were not even then "appreciated to their full extent in America, where the musical *bonbon*, the *Serenade*, is too often held to be the greatest of the songs of this composer." To be sure this serenade ("*Leise fliehen meine Lieder*") which belongs to the last year of the composer's life (1828), is much better than ninety-nine per cent. of the songs in vogue, but it is not one of Schubert's best. The other serenade *Hark, Hark the Lark* (1826) is a more favorable specimen of his muse, and in Liszt's arrangement it has also become a favorite of concert pianists; Paderewski plays it inimitably.

The origin of this song illustrates the spontaneity of Schubert's genius. One afternoon when he was sitting with some friends in a suburban tavern, he saw a book lying on a table. Turning over its leaves slowly, he suddenly halted and exclaimed: "A lovely melody has just come into my head; if I only had some music paper!" One of his friends promptly ruled lines on the back of a bill of fare, and Schubert, undisturbed by the tavern noises, forthwith jotted down the immortal song.

To the year 1825 belongs the popular *Ave*

Maria, concerning which Schubert wrote in a letter: "People were greatly astonished at the devotion which I have thrown into the Hymn to the Blessed Virgin, and it seems to have seized and impressed everybody. I think that the reason of this is that I never force myself into devotion or compose hymns or prayers unless I am really overpowered by the feeling; that alone is real, true devotion."

The Mignon poems in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* appear to have been special favorites of Schubert; but here again the one best known is by no means the best. *Nur wer die Sehnsucht Kennt*, which is included among the "Favorite Songs," is no doubt a beautiful song, yet there is much less of inspiration and of the true Schubert in it than in the two settings of *So lasst mich scheinen bis ich werde.* The first of these, dated 1821 (No. 395), is so exquisitely musical and melancholy that it cannot have been dissatisfaction with it that induced Schubert to give the poem another setting (No. 490) entirely different, in 1826. Robert Franz included this second one in his collection of Schubert songs, but not the earlier one; at which I am surprised, for they are both ravishingly beautiful; pervaded by a euphony of melody and harmony such as no one had at command before Schubert. And what an un-

precedented feat—to give two immortal settings to one song! Nay, he even commenced another one, which unfortunately remained a fragment*. The other Mignon songs—*Kennst du das Land* and *Heiss mich nicht reden*—are far inferior to these, though the last-named is not at all bad.

Many more of the songs deserve separate mention, but the limitations of space compel me to content myself with a few remarks regarding the famous song-cycles. The *Pretty Maid of the Mill* is a series of songs based on a group of twenty-five poems of that name by

* See Mandyczewski's *Revisionsbericht*, pp. 85–86. The songs referred to may be found in vol. vi., p. 31, and vol. ii., p. 132 of the Peters edition (which, unfortunately, is not arranged chronologically), and in vol. vi., p. 191, and vol. viii., p. 172 of the chronological *Gesammtausgabe* of Breitkopf & Härtel. In this edition there are no fewer than five versions of *Nur wer die Sehnsucht Kennt*. Every lover of German song ought to possess one of these two editions. The best way to do is to go over all the songs a few times, marking those which seem best, and thus separating the wheat from the chaff. To amateurs who have not sufficient faith in their own judgment, I cannot commend too highly the *Auswahl* or selection of sixty-one Schubert songs made by Robert Franz and published by Breitkopf & Härtel. Franz chose particularly those songs in which both the poem and the music are of a high order of merit; omitting those in which the music too far exceeds in value the verses. But this does not prevent his collection from including the best songs; for, as a rule, Schubert's musical inspiration was proportionate to the merits of his poems.

Wilhelm Müller (the father of Professor Max Müller). The poems (five of which Schubert omits) tell the story of a miller's pretty daughter who is loved by a young apprentice of her father's trade, and who apparently loves him too; but her fickle mind is changed by the appearance of a gay young huntsman. The first ten songs present the various phases of the young miller's courtship. In the eleventh—*Mine*—he is at last able to proclaim that the beloved maid is his. But with the fourteenth the hunter appears, exultation is displaced by jealousy and wounded pride; and, convinced that she is lost to him forever, the young miller drowns himself in the brook, which in the last song sings his lullaby.

Schubert was not the first to write a song-cycle. Beethoven wrote one before him, a setting of Jeitteles's "Liederkreis," *An die ferne Geliebte*—six songs of no great musical merit, but having each its own music, with a reminiscence of the first in the last, and connected by instrumental interludes. Schubert's *Müllerlieder* are not thus connected. The bond of union here lies poetically in the story and musically in the picturesque piano part, which constantly keeps before our eyes the brook along which the whole tragedy is enacted. "Rivulets dance their wayward round, and

beauty born of murmuring sound" is everywhere. The brook plays almost as prominent a part throughout the cycle as the galloping horse does in the *Erlking*, an amazing variety of rhythmic devices being used to make us ever aware of its presence. "The brook and the mill-wheel," writes Mr. Elson, "have mingled their tones through the set, very much in the same manner as a *Leitmotiv* runs through a Wagnerian opera; and it is astonishing to note in how many different emotions Schubert has pictured the sequestered stream."

The whole series of the *Müllerlieder* was composed in one week, in 1823. The story of how they happened to be written is characteristic of Schubert's method of creating songs. When Randhartinger, who had been one of Schubert's schoolfellows, resided in Herrengasse, Vienna, Schubert often called to take a walk with him. One afternoon he failed to find his friend in, but found on the table a volume containing the *Müllerlieder*. After reading a few of them he put the book in his pocket and went straight home to compose. When Randhartinger returned he missed the poems, which he himself had intended to set to music, and on the following morning he was surprised to find his book on Schubert's table. "Do not be angry," pleaded Schubert; "the poems inspired me so

that I had to compose music to them, and I scarcely slept two hours last night, and now you see the result. I have already seven poems set to music. I hope you will like my songs; will you try them?" Randhartinger sang them, and forthwith gave up all idea of writing music of his own for these poems.*

The *Müllerlieder*, though they did not attract much attention when they first appeared, are now sung more frequently at concerts, and altogether have enjoyed a wider popularity than any of the other Schubert cycles. Here again popularity and merit are not synonymous. Robert Franz admitted eleven of the twenty *Maid of the Mill* songs into his select edition; and among those there are at least five (*Wohin? Morgengruss, Des Müller's Blumen, Trockene Blumen, Die liebe Farbe*) which are a joy forever; yet none of them quite reaches the level of half a dozen of the *Winter Journey* songs, which represent Schubert at his very best.

The *Winter Journey* is based on another cycle of poems by the same Wilhelm Müller. The twenty-four poems do not, however, tell a continuous story, as the *Schöne Müllerin* does; and Schubert accordingly took the liberty of changing the order in which they succeed one another.

* A. B. Bach, *The Art Ballad*, p. 105. Kreissle, p. 315.

Nor did he compose them all at the same time. They appeared in two groups of twelve each, the first group being begun in February, 1827. Half a dozen of them, Lachner tells us, were written in one morning, and, as before stated, Schubert received only twenty cents a piece for them. The best numbers in this first group are *Gute Nacht* (in which the transition from minor to major at the words "Will dich im Traum" is of ineffable beauty), *Gefror'ne Thränen*, *Erstarrung*, *Der Lindenbaum*, *Wasserfluth*, *Irrlicht*, and *Frühlingstraum*.

It is in the second group of the *Winter Journey* songs, however, that Schubert, as I have intimated, reaches the high-water mark of his genius. *Die Post*, *Der greise Kopf*, *Im Dorfe*, *Der stürmische Morgen*, and especially the last five—*Der Wegweiser*, *Das Wirthshaus*, *Muth*, *Die Nebensonnen*, *Der Leiermann*, would alone have made him the greatest of all song-writers. They are ineffably sad, like all that is best in art.*

* I shall never forget the day when I first heard these songs, as a youth of fifteen or sixteen years of age. We were living in the Oregon wilderness and one day my brother Edward received the *Winter Journey* songs and sang the last twelve of them in the evening. I was lying under a tree in front of the house, playing with my dog, when those sad strains came to my ears. We had had good music in our house ever since my childhood, but nothing had ever affected me so deeply as these new melodies and modulations. I buried my face in Bruno's fur and sobbed like a

Schubert once wrote in his diary that "Grief sharpens the intellect and strengthens the soul, whereas joy seldom does anything for the one and makes the other weak or frivolous." And again: "My musical compositions are the product of my intellect and my sorrows; those which were born of sorrow alone, appear to give the world the most satisfaction." Though naturally of a cheerful disposition he had his days of depression, on one of which he wrote that he wished every night when he went to sleep that he might never awake again. The interesting question arises whether the melancholy songs of the *Winter Journey* are a record of personal grief, expressing "the winter of his discontent," or whether the sad music is simply a reflex of the sad words. His personal friends and biog-

child. To this day I cannot play them over without having tears come to my eyes. Indeed, if tears are the deepest and most sincere tribute to art, I must place Schubert above all other composers, for he has made me weep oftener than any other. His music evidently had the same effect on his contemporaries. Spaun relates that at Linz one day when Vogl sang and Schubert played, the performance had to be stopped because, after some sad songs, all the women and girls present were shedding tears and the men could scarcely hold back theirs. When Hiller was a boy he heard Vogl and Schubert in Vienna. He relates in his *Künstlerleben* that it was the deepest musical impression he had ever received, and that tears coursed down the cheeks even of the veteran Hummel. I have already cited Liszt's confession that the Schubert songs often moved him to tears.

raphers have expressed contradictory opinions on the subject. Spaun relates:

"For some time Schubert had been in a melancholy mood and appeared to be depressed. To my question what was going on he replied, 'You will soon find out.' One day he said to me: 'Come to Schober's to-day, I'll sing you a cycle of weird songs. I am anxious to know what you will say. They have affected me more deeply than any of my other songs.' When the time came he sang to us the whole of the *Winter Journey*. We were quite dumfounded by the gloomy mood of these songs, and Schober finally remarked that he liked only one of them—the *Lindenbaum*. Schubert replied: 'I like these songs better than any of the others, and you will come to like them too.' He was right, for soon we became enthusiastic over these melancholy songs, which Vogl sang incomparably."

Mayrhofer and Kreissle also connect the mood of these songs with personal disappointments; whereas Schober thinks that Schubert in this case, as always, simply mirrored in his music the mood of the poems. Probably the mournfulness of these songs resulted from both these factors combined; but what is of even greater interest is the question, "Why were these songs so preëminently inspired?" The answer is, I think, to be found in the fact that Schubert composed them immediately after a delightful trip in the country lasting nearly two months; during which he was happy among friends and

admirers and laid in a good supply of energy and creative power. He enjoyed himself so much on this trip that he dreaded the idea of returning to Vienna,* and it is probable that a tinge of longing for the delights of the country is mingled with the melancholy of the last songs of the *Winter Journey*.

At the same time the gloom that pervades Müller's poems would quite suffice to account for the sadness of Schubert's music, which is always a real *Doppelgänger* of the poem he has in hand. The first of the second set—*Die Post*—depicts the anguish of soul resulting from the failure of the coach to bring a letter from the city where the beloved dwells. This song is in major, and rather animated in tempo; yet, as Sir George Grove has remarked, "even in the extraordinary and picturesque energy of *Die Post* there is a deep vein of sadness." The next number, *Der greise Kopf*, is the youth's lament that the grave still seems so far off. In *Die Krähe* the youth fancies that a raven has followed him from the town in the expectation of dining on his body. *Im Dorfe* tells us of the end of all his hopes. *Der Stürmische Morgen*—the stormy morning—is simply

* See his letter to Frau Dr. Pachler printed by Kreissle, pp. 402, 403.

the reflection outdoors of the winter in his soul.

Sadder and sadder become the poems, more woe-begone the music. *Der Wegweiser* shows us the guiding post which points to the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns. It is heart-rending music, and one of its sublime touches is the unchanging G of the melody during the five bars in which the youth's eyes stare fixedly at the sign-post. If possible a still greater miracle of genius and sadness is the next song—*Das Wirthshaus*. This "tavern" is a cemetery which seems to invite the weary wanderer; but every room is taken and there is no rest for him. Here again Schubert has written in a major key a song more pathetic than any other composer's minor keys. There is no song I love more than this. *Muth* is an attempt to shake off the snow and take courage. It is a brisk song, but it is in a minor key; a vain effort, disconsolate, like all the others. Another doleful *Lied* in a major key is the next, *Die Nebensonnen*, a song, like the others, seemingly, as inevitable as the air we breathe, yet absolutely original in every bar. What the three suns are is not clear from the poem. Max Müller wrote to Dr. Friedländer: "I share your belief that the sun and the two eyes of the beloved are meant. As these two suns shine no more,

he wants the third, the real sun of life, to go down too."

The disconsolate climax of the cycle is reached in its last song, *Der Leiermann.* In a prose translation: "Yon, behind the village stands the hurdy-gurdy player; with stiffened fingers he turns his crank. Barefoot on the ice he walks, and never a copper is in his tray. No one wants to hear him, no one looks at him; the dogs growl, yet he heeds them not, but incessantly turns his crank. Shall I go with you, strange old man? Will you accompany my songs with your instrument?"

The hurdy-gurdy is an instrument with a drone-bass of two tones a fifth apart. This drone-bass Schubert imitates by repeating the notes A E incessantly throughout the sixty-one bars of the song, producing an ineffably melancholy and realistic effect, which is heightened by the equally characteristic melody. Though the music is thus simply a mirror of the text, one cannot help reading into it a bit of autobiography—for did not Schubert, also, sing on incessantly; and did not his tray, too, remain forever empty?

If anything could intensify the pathos of these songs it would be the thought that Schubert's last pen-strokes were made while revising the proof-sheets of them, a few days before

his death; and that this work must have cast an additional gloom on his illness and may have hastened the end; for brain-work is very injurious to typhoid-fever patients.

While these *Winter Journey* songs were the last that Schubert saw in print, they were by no means the last he had composed. The *Leiermann* was written about a year before his death, and is numbered 540. After it he wrote twenty-seven more *Lieder*, the last of the fourteen included in the *Swan-song* group being number 567. Some of the thirteen songs intervening between the *Winter Journey* of 1827 and the *Swan song* of 1828 do not reach a very high level, but in the *Swan-song* group we not only have Schubert again at his very best, but we find him (like Wagner after *Lohengrin*) making once more a new departure and creating still another epoch in the evolution of the *Lied;* opening up a mine in which, afterward, Schumann and others delved and enriched themselves.

The name *Schwanengesang* was given to Schubert's last fourteen songs by Hasslinger, their publisher; and owing to the appropriateness of the title it has been retained. All but the last of them (the *Taubenpost*, dated October, 1828) were written in August, 1828, a month forever notable in the annals of the *Lied*, for

seven * of these songs are among the very best of Schubert's productions, and another one, the *Serenade*, is the most popular of all his songs.

The first seven of these fourteen we owe in a way to Beethoven. That is, the Rellstab poems to which they are set were found among Beethoven's papers and Schindler allowed them to be taken away by Schubert, who, two days later, brought back the music to *Liebesbotschaft*, the *Krieger's Ahnung*, and *Aufenthalt*. The last named is one of those compositions which caused Rubinstein to exclaim rapturously: "Once more and a thousand times more, Bach, Beethoven, and Schubert are the three highest pinnacles of music." It is a song which, like many others of the *Schwanengesang* and *Winterreise* groups, one can sing daily for years and never tire of it, and which must send the cold shivers down the back of any one who hears it the first time—provided it is well sung and well played. There is in it as superb an energy as in the *Erlking*, and every one is delighted with the animated and melodious bass, which imitates the voice here and there with a canonic art that old Sechter (who was to give Schubert lessons in counterpoint shortly after this song was

* *Aufenthalt, In der Ferne, Der Atlas, Ihr Bild, Die Stadt, Am Meer, Der Doppelgänger.*

penned! !) could not have attained after a hundred years of pedagogics. The high G, eighteen bars before the end, is as grand a climax as can be found in vocal music; and the most delightful interlude I know of is the eight bars following the words "bleibet mein Schmerz."*

In this song, as in many others, Schubert soars far above his poet. There were moments when his inspiration was so elemental and irresistible that any poem he happened to have in hand got the benefit of it. It is nevertheless true that a fine poem did much to *command* that inspiration. This is why so many of the Goethe songs, beginning with *Margaret at the Spinning Wheel* and the *Erlking*, are among his best. And this is why each of the six Heine songs in the *Schwanengesang* † is a gem. They are original in every bar in spite of the five hundred and sixty songs preceding them, and yet every bar has the initials F. S. stamped on it. Emotionally these songs are as wonderful as they are from a purely musical point of view. How different is the

* The A sharp in the sixth of these bars is one of those strokes of genius which make the study of Schubert's songs a source of ever-increasing delight. Only in the white heat of genius could such a note as that A sharp have been written.

† *Der Atlas, Ihr Bild, Das Fischermädchen, Die Stadt, Am Meer, Der Doppelgänger.*

gloomy, tragic, heaving agony of *Der Atlas*, bearing on his shoulders the sorrows of a world, from the tender pathos of the lover who, in *Ihr Bild*, gazes at his beloved's picture, as in a dream, and cannot believe that he has lost her. In *Die Stadt* (*The City*) the poet is being rowed away in a boat, and the rays of the setting sun give him a final glimpse of the city where his beloved dwells. In this song, as Mr. Elson has remarked, "the steady plash of the oar of the boatswain and the gray stillness of the waters at eventide are pictured with graphic power by a constantly recurring broken chord." *Am Meer* gives us another splendid portrayal of the sea. "Listen to the few chords that introduce and close *Am Meer*," writes Mr. Philip Hale. "They at once suggest a mood. They speak of the sea at nightfall, and yet how simple the main accompaniment! How simple the structure of the song itself!" *

With the exception of the *Taubenpost*, the last two of the songs are *Am Meer* and *Der Doppelgänger*—an interesting circumstance, because they typify the two Schuberts. *Am Meer* is all

* Sir George Grove devotes an interesting paragraph (p. 367, vol. iii., of his *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*) to the various attempts made by Schubert to imitate sounds of nature in his songs—fluttering leaves, leaps of a trout, bells, a post-horn, the song of the nightingale, etc.

melody, in the piano part as well as in the voice. One enjoys it more if one knows what the poem is to which it is wedded, and one admires the appropriateness of the music to the words. Yet it is so complete as a piece of music that one might play it forever as a mere piano piece —a song without words—and be quite satisfied. Not so with the *Doppelgänger*. That grewsome poem Schubert composed in such a way that it needs the underlying poem as a complement as imperatively as Wagner's later operas do. The music enters into the minutest details of the poem, not only verse by verse, but word by word; so that we have here an anticipation not only of Schumann, but even of Liszt. To secure this exact correspondence with the poem, Schubert discards the flowing melody, of which he was the supreme master, and uses for the voice a sort of declamation or recitative, not unlike Wagner's (who at that time was a boy of fifteen). The singer's task here is, first of all, to represent and interpret the poet, while to the pianist are intrusted chords as weird, as thrilling, as modern, as those which accompany the music of Erda and Klingsor in Wagner's *Siegfried* and *Parsifal*. Heine's poem brings before our eyes a man who goes at night to gaze at the house where his beloved used to dwell. In front of the house, to his dismay, he beholds a

pale man gazing at her window, wringing his hands in agony; and the moonlight shows him that this other man is his own self—his double (*Doppelgänger*). Schubert's music, bar by bar, would fit no other poem than Heine's grewsome tale, and from this point of view—as well as for the dramatic expressiveness of its chords —this is the greatest of Schubert's songs. Had he written no other, he would still be the greatest of all song-writers. It is the most thrilling, the most dramatic of all lyrics, and in penning it Schubert helped to originate the music of the future. Almost as much as in Weber's *Euryanthe* might the germs of the "Art-work of the Future" be found in the *Doppelgänger*.

In view of all these things one feels like crying out aloud in agony at the thought that Schubert should have died just when a new world of beauty was opening before him. If he could have lived but one more year, to set to music one more half-dozen or dozen of Heine's poems!—which were just beginning to appear at this time. Some have expressed indignation at the epitaph which was put on Schubert's grave: "Music has here entombed a rich treasure, but still fairer hopes;" yet this was literally true—more so than those who wrote it could have realized. I am convinced

that if Schubert had lived another thirty years he would have anticipated all that is new in the harmonies of Wagner, Liszt, Chopin, and Grieg. As a *creator* he would have towered as high above all other musicians as Shakespeare does above all other poets. I am often haunted and tortured by the words he spoke on his deathbed to Bauernfeld: "Entirely new harmonies and rhythms are in my head." But they were buried in his grave unborn.*

The belief is still quite prevalent in America and England that there is less melody in German music than in Italian. Schubert alone would utterly refute this notion. Of all melodists the world has seen he was the most spontaneous, fertile, and inexhaustible. Rossini is the prince of Italian melodists, and in 1828 no one would have dreamed of ranking Schubert as high as him. But what has become of Rossini's melodies? With the exception of the *Bar-*

* If we take the last of all his songs, *Die Taubenpost* (*Carrier-pigeon*) and play the second half of the twelfth bar, with pedal, we may possibly conjecture what line of development these new harmonies would have taken. Has the reader ever asked himself whom he would choose to be if a fairy permitted him to exchange his own brain for that of any person of the past? I have often asked myself that question, and have invariably answered "Franz Schubert." A man who with his genius *began where he left off* could do greater things than any genius, in any art, has ever accomplished.

ber of Seville and a few tunes from his other works, age has staled and withered them; whereas, Schubert's melodies are as fresh and as modern as on the day they were born. Rossini's tunes had the ornamental stamp of fashion, and fashion is transient; whereas Schubert's melodies have the lasting quality of chaste folk-songs, with the added charms of the highest harmonic art. Schubert liked Rossini's music; but his instinct taught him a higher, nobler style, which fashion cannot affect. At one time, as a youth, he came under the influence of Salieri, who tried to make an Italian of him, advising him not to waste his efforts on the German poets but to compose Italian stanzas. He did compose a dozen or more songs to Italian words,* but here he was like a fish out of water. Mozart, as everybody knows, was at home among the Italians; and his vocal music, even in the German *Magic Flute*, remains essentially Italian. But Schubert was German to the core, and it is marvellous that he should have surpassed the Italians—who hitherto had had almost a monopoly of vocal music—not only in regard to the artistic union of verse and melody, but in the charm, flow, and variety of melody. Salieri's advice to Schubert that he should

* Printed in vol. x. of the Breitkopf & Härtel edition.

"husband his resources of melody" was about as useful as a warning to an artesian well not to waste its water.

Schubert's harmonies and modulations are no less original, spontaneous, and varied than his melodies. Robert Franz called him a great harmonic emancipator, and Dr. Riemann has well said that "the entire Schumann and the entire Liszt are in their harmonies an outgrowth of Schubert." As harmonic innovators Bach, Chopin, and Wagner are, in my opinion, the only peers of Schubert. He does not, however, like those masters, modulate habitually with the aid of chromatic progressions, but simply drops from one key into another in the most unceremonious, unprecedented, astonishing, and delightful way. To him all keys are sisters or cousins. Now modulation—unexpectedly passing from one key to another—is preëminently the emotional element in music, and Schubert's mastery of this element of expression explains the power of his songs, above all others, to evoke tears. Modulation, too, is the specifically *modern* element in music, and this is another reason why Schubert's songs seem of to-day and not of nearly a century ago. His modulation, furthermore, brings together not only keys but modes. With other composers, as a rule, a song is either in major or in minor; but with

Schubert these two modes are twins that intertwine in nearly every song. And usually there is a poetic as well as a musical reason for the change from one mode or mood to another, showing how closely Schubert followed the spirit of his poems. As Sir George Grove has aptly said: "With Schubert the minor mode seems to be synonymous with trouble, and the major with relief; and the mere mention of the sun or a smile or any other emblem of gladness, is sure to make him modulate." All these harmonic and modulatory features make it absurd to speak of the piano part of Schubert's songs as "accompaniments," or to play them as such. They are as important as the orchestra is in Wagner's operas.

If anything could be more marvellous than Schubert's melodic and harmonic spontaneity, originality, and variety, it would be the singular appropriateness—one might almost say, inevitableness—of his music to the poem in every case. Here his rare rhythmic faculty comes into full play in devising suggestive figures or modes of movement. And the miracle of it is that the musical idea appropriate to a poem came to him without trouble or reflection, nearly always like a flash of lightning. One day a lady asked him to set to music a certain poem which she gave him. He went to a window,

read it over a few times, and exclaimed: "I have it; it is already completed and will be quite good." In the preceding pages I have related similar instances, all of them showing how differently his brain worked from that of most other composers, who usually needed days, weeks, or months to incubate their ideas. This spontaneity of conception and rapidity of execution gave rise to the impression that he jotted down songs as we write letters, without ever revising them. This impression, which was shared even by Kreissle and Grove, was corrected, as I have before intimated, by Dr. Friedländer, who showed that Schubert habitually copied his songs and nearly always introduced some changes and improvements in the vocal as well as the piano part and the expression marks. This he continued to do even in the songs of the last years of his life, including the *Winterreise* and *Schwanengesang* cycles. Far from being careless, Schubert was extremely critical. In a letter to his brother (cited by Kreissle, p. 329) he consoles himself over the fate of some of his songs with the confession: "only a few of them seemed to me good." There is plenty of other evidence to show that he knew better than any one else which of his songs were mediocre. Could he have been consulted by Mandyczewski, he would have

doubtless advised him to omit many of the songs in the ten-volume edition.

Nor is it true that he was uncritical in regard to the choice of his poems, as has been assumed hitherto. No doubt many of the poems he set to music were unworthy of such an honor. But these were poems he chose in order to please friends, or because there happened to be no other bottles at hand to put his new wine in. Mandyczewski has truly said that "if we take the works of all the poets he utilized it would be impossible to make better selections for musical purposes than those he made." He further revealed his critical fastidiousness by the way in which he omitted from a cycle a poem, or from a poem a stanza, that seemed to him unsuitable for musical alliance. Kreissle relates an incident (p. 211) showing how stubborn he was in regard to such details as the placing of accents.* Each new poet—Schlegel, Müller, Platen, Rückert, Rellstab, Heine—was seized upon eagerly, and for each Schubert found a characteristic musical atmosphere. That he set only six of Heine's poems is due to

* He had a dispute with Umlauff, who thought that in the *Wanderer* the accent should be "O Land, wo bist *du?*" whereas Schubert insisted, most properly, in making it "wo *bist* du?"

the fact that these poems did not begin to appear till shortly before his death.*

* Eighty-nine different poets and writers of verse were drawn upon by Schubert. Goethe leads with 72 poems, followed by Mayrhofer with 47, Schiller 46, Wilhelm Müller 44, etc. Goethe, whom Schubert did more to glorify than all his biographers and commentators put together, did nothing to encourage or help the struggling young composer. When the poet was seventy years old Schubert sent him copies of several of his songs, together with a letter, but Goethe paid no attention to them, thus confirming his own diagnosis when he wrote (in 1796): "I am no judge of music." The great dramatic singer Frau Schroeder-Devrient (whom Wagner admired so much) succeeded, however, in arousing him, at the age of 82, with her singing of the *Erlking*. The aged poet kissed her on the cheek and exclaimed: "Thank you a thousand times for this grand artistic achievement. I heard this song once before, when I did not like it at all; but when sung in your way, it becomes a true picture."

IV

German Song-Writers After Schubert

LOEWE AND THE ART-BALLAD

WE have seen that Schubert was born three years before the end of the eighteenth century, the thirteenth child of a poor schoolmaster; that his first published work was the *Erlking;* that he became famous preëminently as a song-writer, and failed with his operas. By a singular coincidence it happened that on November 30, 1796, just two months before Schubert's birth, there appeared in this world, as the twelfth son of a poor schoolmaster, another boy whose first published work included a setting of the *Erlking*, who became famous chiefly as a song-writer, and failed with his operas. This boy was Johann Carl Gottfried Loewe. He, too, was a most prolific composer, but he had seventy-two years to live and work while Schubert had only thirty-one. The list of his works includes 6 operas, 17 oratorios, about 400 ballads and other songs, besides a large

number of works for chorus, orchestra, organ, and piano.

Loewe had the advantage over Schubert of enjoying a regular position as organist and conductor, and of being able to sing his own songs on concert tours, which took him as far as England. At some of his concerts he appeared in a fourfold capacity — as ballad-singer, pianist, orchestral conductor, and composer. His voice, a tenor, had an unusual compass, and was quite at home in the baritone region. He played his own accompaniments, and his enunciation of the words was remarkably distinct. Nor was he the only one who sang his songs well. Senfft von Pilsach, Krolop, Friedrichs, and, above all, Henschel and Gura, brought them forward and helped to secure for them considerable popularity. Then came a time of reaction, so that Dr. Gehring wrote, in 1880, that "his music, like Reichardt's, has gone by forever." More recently, however, strenuous efforts have been made to revive an interest in his works.*

* In England Albert B. Bach wrote a book, *The Art Ballad: Loewe and Schubert*, of which several editions were printed in a few years. In 1898 the "Harmonie" of Berlin brought out a book by Heinrich Bulthaupt, which tells the story of Loewe's life and describes his principal works. These books, with an autobiographic sketch, constitute the literature on the subject; and to

While Schubert did not write many ballads, and those mostly in his early years, Loewe made a specialty of this species of song; and of all his compositions these alone have survived. The word ballad, unfortunately, has been used to designate a number of entirely different things. Its original meaning was "dance-song" (from the Italian *ballata*). In England, where so-called "ballad concerts" are in our time devoted to all kinds of popular songs indiscriminately, ballad meant a dance-tune as late as the seventeenth century. To-day we have not only vocal ballads but ballads for piano, violin, or orchestra, in which there is no trace of dance-music. The poets have added to the confusion by an inconsistent use of the word ballad.* In this volume we are concerned with the meaning of ballad in the realm of song only; and here a glance at a typical ballad, like the *Erlking*, tells us more than pages of esthetic discussion.

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them I must refer those who, after singing over the ballads contained in the "albums" or selections issued by various publishers, feel enough interest to pursue the matter. Enthusiasts will, of course, procure the complete edition of his songs by Breitkopf & Härtel, in seventeen volumes. Elson's *History of German Song* (pp. 210–214) contains an excellent analysis of Loewe's method of composing.

* See Bulthaupt's remarks on this subject, in the first chapter of his book on Loewe.

That song has a dramatic element in so far as the Erlking, the father, and the child, are heard to speak in melodies of their own; yet it is not really dramatic, but epic, because we hear them only through the medium of the narrator. In other words, a ballad is a song based on a narrative (epic) which may introduce various dramatic, as well as lyrical elements, and which usually has a background of romantic scenery. The German poets originally got the subjects for their ballads from the British poets. In the south the place of the ballad is taken by the more lyrical "romance"; the French romance being usually a sentimental love-song.

Though Loewe failed as an opera-composer, his ballads show that he had a genuine dramatic vein, which is revealed in the often striking harmonies of his piano parts, as well as in the effective treatment of the voice. What he lacked was the divine gift of imperishable melody—that wealth of ideas which has made Schubert immortal. He had melodies enough in his storehouse to furnish forth, perhaps, forty songs; but not four hundred. In his case, as in so many others, less would have been more. There is something almost amateurish in the way in which he introduces a theme or two and keeps on repeating them, with slight changes in rhythm and harmony, throughout an intermi-

nable ballad. In many cases several themes follow one another like a mosaic without any attempt at elaboration or organic union. Yet with all these defects, there are among these songs a considerable number that deserve to be better known; such ballads as *Henry the Fowler*, *Harald*, *Edelfalk*, *Der Fischer*, *The Clock*, *Der Noeck*, *The Moorish Prince*, *Oluf*, *Odin's Ride over the Sea*, and, above all, *Edward* and the *Erlking*.*

MENDELSSOHN

Never was a name more appropriately chosen than that of *Felix* Mendelssohn. Felix means lucky or happy; and certainly Mendelssohn was the luckiest, and had every reason to be the happiest, of all composers. Not only was he, as the son of wealthy parents, able to travel and do whatever he pleased, but throughout

* It is unfortunate for Loewe that some of his champions, like Albert Bach and Bulthaupt, should have tried to prove not only that his *Erlking* is a splendid composition—which it surely is—but that it is even superior to Schubert's. It is possible to maintain that the Erlking's song is more seductive and uncanny in Loewe—though I think the hushed pianissimo accompaniment makes Schubert's more so; but how any one can contend that the galloping of the horse is more realistic, the outcry of the child more agonized in Loewe than in Schubert, quite passes my comprehension. But why these odious comparisons? Both the *Erlkings* are masterpieces.

his life (1809–1847) he enjoyed a popularity far exceeding that of his superiors. In this very prosperity, however, lay the greatest danger to his genius. His music, like his life, is all sunshine; and eternal sunshine is apt to prove monotonous. There are no clouds, no frowning cliffs, no dark abysses, in his songs. They are smooth, elegant, symmetrical, gentlemanly, polished; but never deep, sad, pathetic, or tragic. Schubert found that his friends liked his sad songs best; but Mendelssohn had no occasion for sad songs. Look through the whole list of them—more than six dozen—and you will not find one the sentiment of which is much more than skin-deep. They are, in truth (like the songs of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Weber), the poorest of all his productions, far inferior to his instrumental works—notably his immortal overtures. Yet so popular was he in his day, so eagerly did the shallow public accept everything that came from his pen, that these shallow songs enjoyed for decades a much greater vogue than the infinitely more inspired songs of Schubert, Schumann, and Franz.

The inevitable reaction has perhaps carried the pendulum too far as regards Mendelssohn's music in general; but not too far as regards his songs, most of which stand hopelessly condemned by their own mediocrity. Only six or

seven of them deserve their former vogue—*On the Wings of Song*, the *Winterlied* and *Sonntagslied*, the *Volkslied* ("Es ist bestimmt in Gottes Rath"), *Gruss*, *O Jugend*, *O Schöne Rosenzeit*, and the *Venetianisches Gondellied*. These are fresh, individual, tuneful, and charming. In the others one finds here and there a pretty melodic curve, or a piquant harmonic progression; but for the most part they are aggravatingly trivial and insipid; reminding one by their painful dearth of ideas of the productions of those other song-writers of the Berlin school, Reichardt and Zelter. Some of Mendelssohn's songs are instrumental in character, and there is usually too much conscious striving for symmetry and popularity—too much small talk. The earlier songs are the best. In his later ones,* as Robert Franz has pointed out, "there is no naïveté, nothing but smooth, polished, elegant workmanship—no passion, but only the semblance of it." He is, as Mr. Elson remarks, "never grand or soul-stirring"; he makes symmetry an end rather than a means; and "his song-subjects seem to have been chosen in such a manner that the music should generally be more important than the words." Mr. Elson and Sir George

* The Peters edition of Mendelssohn's songs has an appended *Textrevision* by Max Friedländer, with the dates of the songs.

Grove contend that Mendelssohn did good by preparing the public taste to appreciate the deeper song-writers of Germany. There may be something in this. At the same time his excessive popularity (in England this was positively grotesque) for a long time kept greater names off the concert programmes—as Brahms does to-day.

SCHUMANN

Schumann's music, like Mendelssohn's, is autobiographic. While Mendelssohn's songs are all sunshine, one does not have to sing many of Schumann's to realize that his life was often darkened by mists and storm-clouds. He was neither wealthy nor was his genius appreciated at its true value; and he fought many battles with obtuse critics and shallow Philistines, not so much in his own behalf as for the sake of other men of genius who were unduly neglected. In this volume we are concerned with only one of the serious episodes in his life —his courtship. To most men the period of courtship is the heyday of life; but the course of Schumann's love did not run smooth. In 1836, at the age of twenty-six, he found himself enamoured of Clara, the daughter of his piano teacher, the eminent Friedrich Wieck. The

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father did not favor the suit, because he did not believe that a romantic dreamer like Schumann, who had up to that time devoted himself to art for art's sake, without much regard for pecuniary profits, would be able to support a wife in comfort. Schumann thereupon tried to improve his worldly affairs by transferring his musical paper, the *Neue Zeitschrift*, to Vienna; but the venture proved a failure and he returned to Leipsic. The uncertainty whether he would be able to call Clara his own lasted four years. Wieck remained obdurate, although by 1840 Schumann's income amounted to about a thousand thalers a year. The case was at last, in accordance with the German custom, brought before the courts, which, after much vexatious delay, decided in favor of the young couple, and they were married on September 12, 1840.

It was during this period of alternating hopes and doubts * that Schumann wrote his best music for piano, as well as for the voice. Up to the year 1840 he had composed only for the piano; and the letters to Clara of the years 1838

* His letters keep us informed regarding his heart affairs. On November 15, 1836, for instance, he writes to his sister-in-law Theresa: "Clara loves me as fondly as ever; but I have resigned her forever." And again, a year later: "The old man is not yet willing to give up Clara, to whom he clings most closely."

and 1839 contain abundant indications that she was in his mind all the time: "I have buried myself in the dream-world of the piano and can play and talk about nothing else but you," he wrote. On February 19, 1840, we find him in a new field: "I am now writing nothing but songs, great and small," he says to a friend. "I can hardly tell you how delightful it is to write for the voice, as compared with instrumental composition; and what a tumult and stir I feel within me when I sit down to it. I have brought forth quite new things in this line." Three days later he writes to Clara: "Since yesterday morning I have written twenty-seven pages of music (something new), of which I can tell you nothing more than that I laughed and wept for joy in composing them." It was the famous song-cycle *Die Myrthen* (*Myrtle Wreath*) opus 25, which he dedicated to his "beloved bride." In sending her his "first printed songs" (*Liederkreis*, opus 24), the following month, he wrote: "When I composed them my soul was within yours. Without such a bride, indeed, no one could write such music—which I intend as a special compliment." And again, on May 15, he writes to his bride: "Once more I have composed so much that it seems almost uncanny. Alas! I cannot help it; I could sing myself to death, like a nightingale. Twelve

Eichendorff songs I have written; but these I have already forgotten and have commenced something new."

This was his state of mind throughout the year when he married, and the result was more than a hundred songs, including the best he ever wrote. They were published as groups, or cycles; among which must be named (1) the *Liederkreis*, opus 24, his first printed songs, nine in all, two of which—*Ich wandelte unter den Bäumen* and *Mit Myrthen und Rosen*—are gems; (2) *Myrthen*, twenty-six songs, the best being *Die Lotosblume*, *Lass mich ihm am Busen hangen*, *Du bist wie eine Blume*, and *Der Nussbaum*; (3) the Eichendorff *Liederkreis*, to which belong the superb *Waldesgespräch* and the *Frühlingsnacht*; (4) the Kerner cycle, opus 35, twelve songs, of which the best are *Wanderlust*, *Frage*, *Stille Thränen*;* (5) the *Frauenliebe-und-Leben*—*Woman's Love and Life*—(with the superb *Er, der Herrlichste von Allen*, and *Seit ich ihn gesehen*); (6) *Dichterliebe*—Poet's Love—(which includes the best of all his songs—*Ich grolle nicht*, besides the admirable *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, *Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen* and *Ich hab' im Traum geweinet*); (7) the *Liebesfrühling* (*Springtime of Love*) cycle, the

* Robert Franz thought that opus 35 included Schumann's best songs. He liked them better than the *Frauenliebe-und-Leben* cycle.

best two numbers of which (*Warum willst du And're fragen?* and *Liebst du um Schönheit?*) as well as *Er ist gekommen*, were written by Clara, who therewith placed herself at the head of all song-writers of her sex. The suspicion that Schumann may have assisted her, is silenced by the fact that the first-named song—the best of the three—does not suggest his style so much as Mendelssohn's. *Liebst du um Schönheit* is more Schumannish, and the opening bar, which recurs again and again, is a stroke of genius that haunts the memory delightfully.

Clara Schumann's edition of her husband's songs, published by Breitkopf & Härtel, comprises (with her own three) two hundred and forty-eight numbers. It is in four volumes and the songs are printed in the order of their appearance. A critical study of them makes it only too obvious that Felix Dræseke was right when he said that Schumann began genius and ended talent. The seventeen songs I have referred to all belong to the year 1840, and so do the only others besides them that seem to me to have the gift of eternal youth—*Sonntags am Rhein*, *An den Sonnenschein*, and the famous ballad *The two Grenadiers*. Among the one hundred and nineteen songs of the third and fourth volumes there is only one—*Er ist's*—that rises above mediocrity. To understand this we

must know that after 1840, with a few unimportant exceptions, he did not write any more songs till nine years later; a time when the cerebral disease to which he succumbed in 1856 had already weakened his creative power and reduced his genius to talent. This terrible affliction enables us to comprehend the lack of ideas in these later songs and their triviality, which otherwise would seem inexplicable in a man so critical as Schumann was. It lessens our wonder at the fact that one who adored Schubert as he did, should have been willing to place before the world such utterly commonplace new settings of the Mignon songs, which his idol had clothed with eternal music; and it makes us forgive even the chalk-and-water insipidity of his *Lieder-Album* for children, opus 79. Hans von Bülow was right when he declared that the *ipsissimus* Schumann was the early Schumann, up to opus 50. Schumann seemed to have a presentiment of his fate when he declared, after the great song-harvest of 1840, that he was satisfied with what he had done and could not promise that he would produce anything further in that line.

It has been assumed for a long time that Schumann, coming after Schubert, and benefiting by his example, must necessarily represent a higher phase in the development of the *Lied.*

He is supposed, in particular, to have assumed a more critical attitude toward the poems he set to music and to have increased the significance and importance of the piano part. We have seen, however, that Schubert's alleged uncritical attitude toward poets and poetry is largely a figment of the imagination; and, on the other hand, the eminent historian Ambros has pointed out that Schumann is by no means impeccable, but was guilty of some gross lapses of taste.* One great advantage Schumann had. Surviving Schubert by twenty-eight years, he had a whole new generation of poets to draw upon; above all, Heine, who became the favorite of lyric composers from the moment of his appearance shortly before Schubert's death,† because of his terse form and intense emotionalism. Schumann made a specialty of him; but so, no doubt, would Schubert have done, had he lived longer; and I must say that, much as I admire the emotional realism of

* See W. A. Ambros, *Robert Franz*, 1872, p. 13; or his *Bunte Blätter*.

† Challier's bibliography of songs, which was published in 1886, includes more than 3,000 settings of Heine poems. Goethe comes next with 1,700. The other lyric poets lag far behind. Of Heine's individual poems *Du bist wie eine Blume* had had (at that date) 160 settings by different composers; *Ich hab' im Traum geweinet* and *Leise zieht durch mein Gemüth*, each 83; *Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam*, 76; *Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten*, 37.

Schumann's settings of some of Heine's songs, I wonder at his failure to be inspired by others he attempted (which could not have happened to Schubert); and none of them—not even *Ich grolle nicht*, one of the most superb songs ever written—seems to me quite so inspired as four of Schubert's six Heine songs: *Der Atlas*, *Ihr Bild*, *Am Meer*, and *Der Doppelgänger*. There is a spontaneity and an inevitableness about these that Schumann never quite attains, even at his best.

More incorrect still than the notion that Schumann "displays a more finely cultivated poetic taste than Schubert," is the assertion made by Dr. Philip Spitta, in his otherwise excellent analysis of the characteristics of Schumann's songs,* that "with Schubert and Mendelssohn we may very properly speak of the piano-forte part as an 'accompaniment,' however rich and independent it occasionally appears. But with Schumann the word is no longer appropriate, the piano-forte asserts its dignity and equality with the voice; to perform his songs satisfactorily the player must enter fully into the singer's part and the singer into the player's, and they must constantly supplement and fulfil each other."

* Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. iii., pp. 411, 412.

As a matter of fact, all this applies to Schubert quite as much as to Schumann. Already in his earliest period we find songs like *Margaret at the Spinning Wheel* and the *Erlking* in which the piano-forte part is quite as important as the voice; and to call the piano-forte parts of the *Schwanengesang* and *Winterreise* songs "accompaniments," is an absurdity.

Reissmann comes nearer the truth when he says that in Schumann the piano part "gains a *predominance over the voice* which it has not in Schubert's works." There are few Schubert songs to which we could apply what he says of many of Schumann's: that the vocal part is "the mere skeleton into which the piano accompaniment first breathes the breath of life." Robert Franz once said to Waldmann that some of Schumann's songs, like *Waldesgespräch* and *Dein Bildniss wunderbar*, are "piano pieces pure and simple, with a superadded vocal part." A German critic has gone so far as to say that Schumann's songs are "piano-forte studies with accidental vocal accompaniments." This is an obvious exaggeration; yet Schumann himself regretted that his musical ideas were usually "piano-thoughts"; and this was due, no doubt, to the fact that for ten years, until he began to write songs, he had composed solely for the piano.

Perhaps we can hit the nail on the head by saying, that whereas in Schubert the vocal and piano parts are of equal importance, in Schumann the piano often predominates. It must be remembered, however, that Schumann's vocal style, like Schubert's, is variable. In some cases we have the tuneful simplicity of a folk-song; in others we have melodies "projected in bold and soaring lines"; in many Schumann applies the declamatory principle of which Schubert gave so perfect an example in the *Doppelgänger*. This declamatory style enables a composer to follow the poet word by word and the hearer to understand the poem distinctly; and it is therefore in the sphere of lyric song what Wagner's "speech-song" is in the music-drama.

Though we have seen that only twenty of Schumann's two hundred and forty-five songs are of the highest order of merit, these twenty are so superlatively good that they will always insure him a place in the front rank of song-writers. Specialists and students will, of course, find interesting details of vocal treatment, harmony, and rhythm in many of his other songs. Schumann was fond of syncopations and anticipations, which give his rhythms and harmonies a unique interest. His pictorial or descriptive power does not

equal Schubert's: he never could have penned the *Erlking*. On the other hand, he had a humorous vein, which Schubert lacked, and which ranges from "students' joviality" to "Heine's bitterest irony," as Dr. Spitta remarks, with slight exaggeration. He was particularly successful in reproducing in music that "mixture of humor and tragedy" which is characteristic of Heine. Several of his songs give musical expression to "that mirth of Heine's which seems always on the verge of tears," as Mr. Fuller Maitland remarks.* In his use of "germs of ideas to give the impression of a vague, dreamy, veiled sentiment," he is also unique. That he had the mystic veneration of the German romanticists for all the phases of nature is made manifest in many of his songs. All the best traits of his genius are united in *Ich grolle nicht*. I am aware that some have affected to sneer at this song because it is so popular. But popularity in the case of a composer like Schumann, who never stoops to conquer, is a sign of merit, not of demerit. Indeed, Schumann has been more lucky than some other song-writers in winning the widest popularity for his best effusions.

* Page 67 of his *Schumann*, which remains the best short treatise on that master in any language.

FRANZ

Robert Franz (1815–1892) is another composer who, like Schumann, was inspired by love to write immortal songs. It came about in this way. He reached his fourteenth year before anything had happened to indicate that he might be destined for a musical career; except that in school an irresistible instinct had led him—instead of singing in unison with the other children—to add an alto part to the choral melodies; an accomplishment for which, however, the stupid teacher actually and repeatedly punished him! In his fourteenth year he came across an old-fashioned piano, or spinet, in the house of a relative; and this, as he relates in an autobiographic sketch, decided his fate. His mother succeeded in persuading his father to buy the instrument and to get a cheap teacher for him. There was little to be learned, however, from the teachers of Halle, and Franz's mind was moreover too individual to benefit much from formal instruction. His main sources of musical information and culture were the organ performances in church; and after he had acquired some skill on that instrument we find him running from church to church to take the organist's place in playing a choral stanza

or two. The works of the great masters kindled in him an enthusiasm that led him to try his own hand at composition; but, as he was ignorant of the theory of harmony and counterpoint, the results were such that, as he afterward remarked, if a young man came to him with such productions he would advise him to choose anything but music for a profession.

His father, though adverse to the idea of his adopting the career of a musician, consented to give him a chance, and sent him for two years to Dessau to study with Friedrich Schneider. He returned with more immature compositions in his trunk, while his efforts to secure a remunerative position had failed. His friends and relatives had no sympathy with one who seemed bent on throwing himself away on what they looked down on as a "breadless" art; so he had to seek consolation in the study of his favorite composers. These were Bach, Handel, and Schubert, whose works he pored over with feverish enthusiasm. Comparison of their finished productions with his own juvenile efforts disgusted him so thoroughly with the latter that he threw them into the fire; and for a period of six years he had not the courage to write anything more. Despair had taken possession of him and his musical career seemed ended.

FRANZ.

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This was the situation early in the year 1843. A powerful impulse was needed to restore his self-confidence, to reawaken his creative energy. It came in the form of romantic love, which has ever been the chief source of the fine arts. He fell in love with Luise G., the daughter of a well-to-do physician. She was his pupil, and it seemed at first as if music had united their hearts. But the time came when he found that she was not to be his. It was under the influence of these experiences, hope followed by what seemed an irreparable loss, that the songs embodied in his opus 1, and dedicated to this girl were written. When he composed them he had no thought of publication. They were merely the effusions of a full heart. But his friends urged him to get them printed, and the result is charmingly related by him in a letter to his friend Weicke, dated July 18, 1843:

"Within the last six months I have become a composer; how it happened, I do not know. So much is certain: nearly every day has brought forth a new song. You can imagine what a blessing that may prove. Now my neighbors put it into my head that these songs were good. I was disinclined to believe this and therefore sent a number of them for inspection to Schumann. He not only made me still more puffed up by his approval, but he gave them, without my knowledge or desire, to a publisher, and they have been printed. Just think of it: '*Lieder* by Robert Franz,' etc. Every corner-stone must laugh loud in its en-

thusiasm! Were I to tell you all the flattering and gratifying experiences I have had in reference to my productions, it would smack much of vanity. One thing, however, I cannot suppress in my joy: Mendelssohn has written me a long letter and told me things which surely are seldom said to any one. He is full of joy and amiability . . . I send you a copy of my songs, and expect a detailed, sound critique; tell me the truth bluntly, it will do no harm, and I shall be more grateful than if you write me flatteries *honoris causa.*"

Mendelssohn had written to him "May you give us many, many more works like this, as beautiful in conception, as refined in style, and as original and euphonious;" while Schumann wrote for his *Neue Zeitschrift* a review of the twelve songs first issued, wherein he once more revealed his keen instinct for discovering genius. He pointed out that these songs mirrored the new spirit in poetry, and illustrated the progress which the *Lied* had made since the days of Beethoven: "Genuine singers, endowed with poetic taste, are required for their interpretation," he wrote; "they are most enjoyable when sung in solitude and in the twilight." "Were I," he concludes, "to dwell on all the exquisite details, I should never come to an end; true music-lovers will discover them for themselves."

Unfortunately, a musician cannot live by praise alone. Pecuniary profit there was none from these songs. Indeed, Franz once declared

that he had practically made a present to the world of half of his *Lieder*. To support himself, he had to play the organ at a local church and give music-lessons at the university, where he was also appointed musical director later on (1859). In this way he might have earned his bread and butter to the end of his life had it not been for a physical infirmity which grew upon him and finally incapacitated him for all work.

Physiologists tell us that the children of aged parents are peculiarly liable to all sorts of degenerate nervous conditions, such as epilepsy, insanity, blindness, and deafness. Now, Robert Franz's father had committed the indiscretion of marrying after he had passed his sixtieth year; and Robert's fate corroborated the physiologists. Before he was thirty years old his nervous system and his hearing had become somewhat impaired. In 1848 he married Marie Hinrichs, and not long after his marriage a serious accident occurred. He was at the Halle railway station, waiting for the train to Leipsic, when suddenly the shrill whistle of a locomotive sounded close by. It seemed to pierce his ears, as he afterwards related, and for a time he could hear nothing but a confused buzzing. A few days later his hearing returned, but the highest tones were gone and never came back; and from that time on one tone

after another, down the scale, vanished forever. In 1864 his ears were painfully affected if he only *wrote* music. In 1867 he was obliged to give up his positions as organist and conductor; he was suffering at that time from such frightful hallucinations, especially at night, that his friends feared he would become insane. The year 1876 found him totally deaf, and three years later his right arm became paralyzed from the shoulder to the thumb.

When I visited him in July, 1891, all but the first two fingers of both his hands were paralyzed. He could shake my hand, but not press it. He expressed his regret that he was absolutely deaf and that I would have to write on a slate whatever I wished to say. "America again!" he exclaimed, after reading what I had written. "Most of my friends seem to be Americans. I do not say this as a mere polite phrase, but because it is actually true. I assure you that of every six letters I receive, five are from America or England. . . Other nations are proud of their authors and composers —look at France, England, and Italy—but the Germans ignore theirs till they are dead, and then they erect statues to their memories."*

* A full account of the very interesting talk I had with him appeared in the *Century Magazine* for June, 1893, under the head of "An Hour with Robert Franz."

It cannot be denied that a full knowledge of the shabby treatment accorded by contemporaries to Bach, Mozart, and Schubert had not yet taught the Germans to give up their idiotic maxim that the only true genius is a dead genius. It was only the men of genius, like Schumann, Mendelssohn, Liszt, and Wagner, that were able to appreciate Franz's genius. "Some of the Berlin critics," he said to me, "have a theory that I do not compose my own songs, but hire a somnambulist, who dictates them to me, and that I then hypnotize him again to correct the manuscript—the cruelest cut of all!" The Brahms clique looked down on him as a "dilettante!" But it was not the direct attacks so much as the policy of *Todschweigen*—persistent ignoring—that hurt his feelings and kept his tray (like that of poor Schubert and his *Leiermann*) forever empty. Luckily, in 1867, when he was obliged to give up his work, he received a pension of $150 a year for his editing of the works of Bach. Incredible as it may seem, this pension was taken away from him ten years later, when he was totally deaf. He would have had to spend the rest of his life in a poorhouse had not, in the meantime, generous friends and admirers taken steps to keep the wolf from the door.

The Leipsic publisher, Constantin Sander—

who knew that Franz had been obliged to change his residence repeatedly to more humble quarters, but whose efforts to help him by trying to create a greater demand for his songs had been unavailing—conceived the plan of getting up a subscription in behalf of the deaf, paralyzed composer. The prime mover in the affair was Baron Senfft von Pilsach, the director of a life-insurance company in Berlin, and well known as an amateur concert and opera singer. He enlisted the aid, first of all, of Liszt, and subsequently of Joachim, Niemann, Gura, Vogl, and other eminent artists. Concerts were given in various cities, and the most gratifying pecuniary success attended them. Members of the nobility and others added their contributions, and between November, 1872, and May, 1873, the sum of thirty thousand thalers (nearly $25,000) was raised; sufficient to enable the composer to spend the rest of his days in comfort. America contributed a good part of the gift,* which was made available to Franz on his fifty-eighth birthday.

* America, indeed, may be said to have shown the way, for as early as 1867 a concert was given in Boston which yielded $2,000 for the benefit of Franz. Boston—to its eternal honor be it said—was one of the first cities in the world that had a realizing sense of his genius, thanks to the missionary labors of Otto Dresel, S. B. Schlesinger, B. J. Lang, G. Osgood, and others. John S. Dwight

Baron Senfft von Pilsach had the best of reasons for trying first of all to secure the aid of Liszt, not only because of the prestige of his name, but because he had previously exerted himself in Franz's behalf, with that noble gener-

made excellent translations of some of the poems which Franz had set to music, and Oliver Ditson brought out an edition in two volumes, admirably selected, and embodying some of these translations—a selection concerning which Franz himself wrote in 1879: "I am convinced that this volume will succeed in revealing my tendencies to art-loving Bostonians and others"—the value of which is further enhanced by foot-notes quoting the characterizations of individual songs made by Liszt, Ambros, and others.

Otto Dresel (1826–1890), the high priest of the Franz cult in Boston, was a life-long friend of Franz, though he left Germany in 1848. Mr. W. F. Apthorp has drawn an admirable picture of the relations of these two men, and of their characteristics, in his *Musicians and Music-Lovers*, under the head of "Two Modern Classicists." "Neither of the two," he says, "gave anything to the world without its passing through the ordeal of the other's criticism." And they were both extremely critical. Dresel wrote a large number of songs, but kept them in his portfolio for constant revision; and not till shortly before his death could he make up his mind to publish a few of them. In 1892 Breitkopf & Härtel reprinted these, with some others, making a collection of twenty songs, with German and English text. Four of these are admirable, and will delight every lover of Franz. All of them betray that master's influence in every bar. *O Listen, my Darling*, is rather too obviously inspired by Franz's exquisite *Wonne der Wehmuth*, but it is a fine song all the same. *Maud* is as effective for singers as it is interesting musically, while *Moonlight* and the pathetic *The Flowers all are Faded* are songs that Franz himself might have been proud of.

osity which distinguished him from most other musicians. It grieved his soul that such wonderful songs as Franz's should be so completely ignored, and he therefore made up his mind to help him with his pen as he had helped Wagner and others.* He repeatedly requested Franz to send him some biographic data for an essay, and Franz at last consented, forwarding him, in 1855, a sketch which takes up eleven pages of the first volume of the letters to Liszt by eminent contemporaries.† Liszt made the best possible use of this sketch in an essay which gives a masterful analysis of Franz's genius ‡ and overflows with enthusiasm. Franz was deeply moved by it, and in thanking Liszt for his services as interpreter and missionary, he expressed the belief that even the Berlin and Cologne critics would now sound their trumpets in his praise. But while Liszt's essay and other pamphlets by Ambros, Schuster, and Saran, which appeared about the time the fund was being collected, no doubt won many new

* See my *Wagner and his Works*, vol. i., p. 391, vol. ii., p. 16.

† *Briefe hervorragender Zeitgenossen an Liszt.* Breitkopf & Härtel, 1895. The two volumes include twenty-six letters from Franz.

‡ It appeared first in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, then in a pamphlet, and was finally embodied in vol. iv of Liszt's *Gesammelte Schriften.*

admirers for these songs, the professionals and the public at large had no more idea when Franz died on October 24, 1892, that the world had lost the greatest song-writer since Schubert, than Schubert's contemporaries had that he would be recognized as the greatest song-writer of all time. Mr. Apthorp speaks of "the exceedingly few obituary notices on Franz that appeared in German newspapers shortly after his death;" and I was amazed and disgusted by the same phenomenon.

Some honors had indeed come to Franz in the last years of his long life (as in the case of Schopenhauer, whose tirades against obtuse contemporaries and the policy of maintaining a conspiracy of silence he greatly relished); but it remains for the twentieth century to do full justice to his genius. When Dr. Hueffer wrote his volume on *The Music of the Future* he quite properly devoted a chapter in it to Franz. Yet, in spite of the neglect he suffered, and his physical infirmities, Franz exclaimed one day that he had been a happy man nevertheless; for he enjoyed his creative work and the editing of the works of Bach and Handel, and he enjoyed the love of his family. He was deeply attached to his wife; and when I visited him, a few months after her death, the tears rolled down his cheeks as he talked of

her and showed me the songs she had written*.

It was at the time of his marriage to Marie Hinrichs that Franz had obtained the sanction of the law for the name which he had borne ever since his childhood. His father's family name was Christoph Knauth, but as he had a brother who was engaged in the same business, and their letters consequently were often mixed up and created trouble, his acquaintances dubbed him "Christoph Franz," and he accepted the name. This explanation, which the composer himself gave in a letter to Otto Lessmann, disposes of the legend that "Robert Franz" was a pseudonym which vanity had led him to adopt by way of indicating that he was the heir of *Robert* Schumann and *Franz* Schubert. This intimation used to arouse his ire, though, on the other hand, he frankly acknowledged the great obligations he was under to those composers. With the same frankness he maintained that if he had profited by their example, he had also taken pains to avoid their faults. And he was right. Among his two hundred and seventy-nine songs there are fewer mediocre ones than among those of either

* They appeared in print under her maiden name, Marie Hinrichs.

Schubert or Schumann. He not only threw his early efforts into the fire, but throughout his life he followed the Horatian maxim of keeping his productions in the desk for years, taking them out now and then and giving them the benefit of his ripening judgment. With merciless severity he eliminated everything that seemed to him likely to prove ephemeral, and kept on retouching the manuscript as long as a single bar was capable of improvement in the vocal or piano part. The result of this process was, as he himself wrote to Osterwald in 1885, that in many cases the final product bore but little resemblance to the song in its first shape.* In another letter he wrote that a critical consideration of his artistic development was rendered impossible by his method of revising: "My opus 1 I consider no better and no worse than my opus 52. Among all the collections there are only three (op. 23, 27, 33) which were published soon after they had been written. In all the others, old and new songs are mixed up."

When Franz's last song collections (op. 51 and 52) appeared in print some fancied that they discovered Wagnerian traits in one or two

* He liked to see a clean manuscript, and therefore rewrote a whole *Lied* whenever he made a few changes in it. Some of the songs were thus copied two, three, and even four times.

of them;* but Franz showed that these were really among his first songs, written in the early forties and kept in the desk several decades; so that any resemblance must have been a coincidence. In 1850 Franz heard *Lohengrin*, and was so much impressed with it† that he dedicated his opus 20 to its composer. It is strange that Franz should have ever cared for Wagner's music, for he hated the drama, with or without music, went to the theatre only once in all his life, and confessed that Mozart's operatic music unfolded its full significance to him only in the concert hall. In after years he did express his dislike of the later music-dramas of Wagner; though, as he had never heard them (the year of his total deafness coincides with that of the first Nibelung performances at Bayreuth), this dislike was little more than a protest against the great ado made over opera, while lyric song was so shamefully neglected.

Wagner, on his part, always was a great admirer of the Franz songs; and when Franz visited him at Zurich, in 1857, he showed him

* See Waldmann's *Robert Franz, Gespräche aus Zehn Jahren*, 1894, which contains the records of many interesting conversations with Franz during a period of ten years.

† See my *Wagner and His Works*, vol. i., pp. 259–263; and further details concerning Franz and Wagner in the German edition of the same work, vol. i., pp. 245–248.

his musical library, which contained, besides the works of Bach and Beethoven, nothing but Franz's songs. "He sang and played a couple of my songs for me," Franz relates, "*Die Widmung* and *Ja, du bist elend*—the latter being his favorite song. And how he did sing, declaiming them with the greatest pathos, quite dramatically. 'You must write operas,' he then said to me; but any one who has penetrated deeply into my songs knows that the dramatic element in them is naught, nor is it intended to be found in them."

Wagner and Franz represent the extremes in modern music, Wagner being the greatest dramatic composer of the century, Franz the greatest lyric composer since Schubert. There are many other differences between them. Wagner was the most modern of the moderns; whereas Franz gravitated toward the times of Bach, the mediæval choral, and folk-song. Wagner's harmonies are chromatic, his form new and irregular; while Franz's harmonies are diatonic, his form traditional and symmetrical. And yet the extremes meet. There are points of contact between the two masters which may be considered even more important than their differences. They are best summed up in the following extract from one of Franz's letters to Liszt (dated September 29, 1855), which

might have been quite as well written by Wagner:

"The poet furnishes the key to the appreciation of my works; my music is unintelligible without a close appreciation of the sister-art: it merely illustrates the words, does not pretend to be much by itself. . . . As a rule, my song is of the declamatory order, and becomes cantilena [flowing melody] only where the feeling is most concentrated. The word is steeped in the tone, or forms, as it were, the skeleton which the sound clothes as its flesh. Therefore, it is easy to sing my songs, if the vocalist saturates himself with the poem and thus endeavors to reproduce the musical content."

Many of Franz's songs are, like parts of Wagner's operas, beautiful if played on the piano alone, simply weaving in the vocal part. Liszt has translated a number of Franz's best songs into the most polished pianistic idiom.* But however delightful these songs may be as simple piano pieces, to get their full beauty the vocal part must be added. Without the voice they charm, with the voice they move to tears. Read one of the poems alone, play the music alone, and then perform them both together; and you will realize that poetry and music combined are a greater emotional power than either of them alone. Bearing this in mind, we can

* See the Breitkopf & Härtel edition of Liszt's song transcriptions.

understand the importance of the fact that modern lyric song has achieved "a fusion of poetry and music which can hardly be carried to a higher pitch of intimacy," as Franz puts it in a letter to Mr. Apthorp. And thus we see that, different as were their methods and aims, Wagner and Franz achieved the same results in their respective spheres.

Franz could not, like Wagner, write his own poems; but he did the next best thing in selecting such verses as were best suited for a marriage with music—poems which suggest more than they express. Judging by the number of times he reverted to them, his favorite poets were Heine and Osterwald, followed by Burns, Lenau, Eichendorff, Mirza-Schaffy, etc.* While Schubert liked picturesque poems, verging on dramatic action, Franz looked for the concise expression of moods. As Liszt has said, he was, above all things, a "psychic colorist." His favorite subjects were love and nature in their diverse moods; and he loved above all things poems which give expression to mixed moods of joy and sadness, or else to that melancholy

* Details regarding Franz's relations to poets and poetry may be found in Prochazka's admirable biography of the master (Leipsic: Reclam), to which I am indebted for many of the facts embodied in this chapter; in Waldmann's book, and in the essays of Liszt and Ambros.

resignation which his own experiences had taught him.

It is characteristic of him that among the poems of Heine he avoids those in which the sentimental mood is disturbed by an ironic final verse. In Burns he avoids the poems that verge on coarse realism. "My musical expression," he wrote to Liszt, "partakes of the nature of the sensitive plant, and avoids, as far as possible, all rude material contact." This sensitiveness is a feminine trait in his art, and there is also a feminine tenderness in his songs such as we find rarely in other composers, excepting Schubert and Chopin. There is in his songs, in the words of Mr. Apthorp, "that native reverence for purity and beauty that we find in the English love-poems of Elizabeth's day. No lover can be too passionate to sing them, no maid too pure to hear them."

Franz told Waldmann that Mendelssohn, who was pleased with his first songs, gave him up after the appearance of opus 4, which showed that he did not intend to follow in his footsteps. To Dresel Mendelssohn once said that there was no melody in Franz's songs. He meant, of course, no instrumental tune; for, as Wagner has pointed out, it was customary in those days to consider as melodies only such vocal tunes as could also be "fiddled and blown and ham-

mered on the piano." As the first object of vocal music is to make the poem intelligible to the hearer, it is to Franz's credit that he avoided such "melody" in favor of a more declamatory style. Louis Ehlert has aptly pointed out that Brahms's songs "are not always planned for a human voice with pianoforte accompaniment; for frequently the latter might be replaced by an orchestra or quartet, and the former by a 'cello or oboe. This is sometimes true of Schumann, rarely of Schubert, never of Franz; and therefore, in this respect (but not in the matter of absolute inventiveness) I hold Franz to be the greatest of all song-writers." This is the true vocal point of view. At the same time, there is plenty of flowing melody in Franz's songs, and there have been singers, like Lilli Lehmann, who have taught us that the declamatory song of Franz and Wagner can be sung as smoothly and insinuatingly as the Italian *bel canto*. To Waldmann Franz said one day:

"If any one understood the *bel canto* of the Italians it was Handel; him I studied and took for my model. Therefore, my *Lieder* are genuine vocal music. Old Garcia expressly declared that of all German songs mine are the best suited to the voice." *

* Emanuel Garcia, one of the most eminent teachers of the Italian method in the nineteenth century. Jenny Lind was one of his

If there were no flowing vocal melody at all in the Franz songs—which is very far from be-

pupils. Why have the great singers been so much slower in mastering the Franz style than the pianists were in mastering Chopin and Schumann? Indolence appears to be one reason. As Liszt remarks sarcastically, it would be too much to ask the leading singers to enlarge their repertory by learning new songs. Concert singers, says Ambros, hunt through the volumes of his songs seeking for some that end with loud, high notes which, like the old Roman *vos plaudite*, are an appeal for applause. But Franz avoids such claptrap devices; he is much more apt to have a song end with a quiet postlude for the piano; and that annoys the singers. In a letter to Mr. Apthorp, Franz refers to the "boundless vanity of professional singers," and declares that "these gentry never care for the thing itself, but only for their own personal success." In most cases this is only too true. The concert singers have yet to learn the lesson which has been taught to their colleagues of the operatic stage, who used to scorn Wagner's music because they found in it no loud final notes, no embellishments, no monopoly for the voice, which they fancied were essential to the securing of applause. They have lived to learn that the public reserves its warmest applause for the Wagner singers; and they will live to learn that those who attend song-recitals are more pleased with songs that are in themselves beautiful, like the best of Schubert's, Franz's, or Grieg's, than with those which merely serve to show off the singer's voice. During seventeen years of professional service as a critic I have hammered away at this subject. One eminent singer, whom I had censured for always singing Brahms and never Franz, begged leave to come to my residence and have me point out some of my favorites. I did so; he sang them and was much applauded. Then he went back to Brahms. Another famous singer, Plunkett Greene, once condescended to put a Franz song on his programme. It received more applause than anything else he sang, and had to be repeated.

ing the case—they would still be among the most melodious of all *Lieder*, because the piano part is all melody. It is nearly always polyphonic, that is, it is *melodious in every part*—in the bass and the middle parts as well as in the treble. Such melodic miniature-work can be found only in the scores of Bach and Wagner; and it is largely owing to it that, as Schumann wrote, we never cease discovering exquisite details in these songs. One might say that Franz was a polyphonic Schubert—what Schubert might have been had he known the works of Bach and studied them with the same devotion as Franz did. Franz spent many of the best years of his life writing what are called "additional accompaniments" to Bach and Handel scores;* and thus his mind became thoroughly

But he never sang any more Franz, at least in New York! Lilli Lehmann has set a good example by her Franz recitals in Germany, which were as great a success financially as artistically. If I have not had much success in persuading singers, I am glad to say, on the other hand, that I have received many letters from amateurs who have thanked me for calling their attention to such treasures as these songs—and this recalls what Franz once said to Dr. Waldmann: "What do I care if a song of mine happens to be applauded in a concert-hall! I could show you hundreds of letters thanking me for the peace, consolation, and gratification my songs had given the writers."

* A full list is given in Prochazka's little book on Franz, pp. 149–153. It cannot be too highly commended to the attention of the directors of choral societies. For a clear account of his object in

saturated with their styles, so that there is hardly one of his songs which does not show what company he has kept. How thoroughly Bach had become second nature to him is shown vividly, *e.g.*, in Lenau's *Der schwere Abend*, the piano part of which, as Ambros has wittily remarked, looks, for all the world, as if Bach had sat down and composed a Franz song by way of expressing his gratitude for all that Franz was to do for him.

It may be said that the soil out of which Bach's best music grew was the stately German church choral; and this, too, exerted a great influence on Franz's art. The first enduring musical expression made on his mind was at the age of three, when he heard Luther's choral *A Fortress Strong is our Lord* blown on trombones from the top of a church tower, as was the delightful custom in those days on festive occasions or at funerals. Chorals were also regularly sung at his home in the evening, and he heard them and played them in church, until they became part of the very tissue of his mind. To this wholesome tonic influence we owe many of the finest harmonies in his piano parts, and such superbly emotional songs as

"filling out the gaps left by the old composers in their scores" see Apthorp's *Musicians and Music Lovers*, pp. 227–249. *Cf.* Prochazka, 88, 103

Widmung, *Leise zieht durch mein Gemüth* and *Bitte*. As a matter of course Franz does not retain the monotonous movement of the church choral, but gives it the rhythmic variety which it had originally before the hymn-writers simplified it.

Beside the polyphony and the chorals there was still another mediæval trait which Franz assimilated and incorporated in his style—the church modes. As the reader is aware, modern music is based on only two modes—major and minor. Like the Greeks, the early mediæval composers had no harmony, but they had a greater variety of modes than we have, that is, scales differing in regard to the position of the semitones. These—the church modes—were found difficult to manage when music became harmonic, and were therefore displaced by our major and minor modes. But there are still traces of them in Bach, and Franz's study of his chorals and other works* had its effect on his own work—quite unconsciously, for, as he told Waldmann, he was not aware of it till a friend said to him one day, "Why, this song is written in a Greek scale." "If you will look through

* Every student of music should own a collection of Bach's chorals and play them daily as the best of all means of educating the harmonic sense. They are in the Peters, Breitkopf and other editions.

my *Lieder*," Franz added, "you will find a number of them, perhaps twenty, especially among the old folk-songs, that are written in these scales." He himself, he says, was not aware that the *Lotosblume* of opus 1 is partly in major and minor, partly in a church mode, till Schäffer called his attention to it. Others are *Zu Strasburg auf der Schanz* (Doric), *Könntst du mein Aeuglein sehn* and *Es klingt in der Luft uralter Sang* (both Phrygian). But the quaintest of these *Lieder* with an ecclesiastic atmosphere is *Es ragt der alte Eborus*, one of the most delightful of all his songs, which I have played a hundred times and shall never tire of; though I fear it will always remain caviare to the general.*

Notwithstanding these mediæval features in Franz's music, he is anything but reactionary. The church modes have been used by such ultra-modern masters as Liszt and Grieg; and as for chorals and the polyphonic interweaving of melodies, where can you find these mediæval traits more effectively used than in the "music of the future"—notably Wagner's *Die Meistersinger?* The simple truth is that there were in Bach important factors of musical evolution which the monophonic school—Haydn, Mozart,

* It may be found in vol. ii., p. 44, of the Franz Album, Kistner edition. See, on these songs, Prochazka, p. 40; Saran, p. 26.

Beethoven—had neglected, and which remained to be developed in the last half of the nineteenth century, after the discovery had been made that old Bach was really a romanticist. The peculiarity of Franz lies in this that, while he absorbed this old romanticism more completely than any one else, he was in other respects one of the most modern of moderns. Songs like *Im Mai*, *Der Schnee ist zergangen*, *Rastlose Liebe* and *Meerfahrt* show how carefully he had studied the pianistic idiom of Chopin—a point which previous writers have not sufficiently emphasized.* Chopin taught him the use of "scattered" or broken chords, the tones of which can only be united with the aid of the pedal, the result being ravishing new harmonies and tone-colors. Schubert would have been intensely interested in these new harmonies. The euphony of *his* piano parts is much enhanced by the use of the modern tone-sustaining pedal; but in Franz's songs the pedal is as absolute a necessity as in Chopin's music. Yet what Chopin taught him was merely the way of doing it. He did not copy his music, for his own imagination was inexhaustible in the discovery of new ways of distributing chords.

* His touch is said to have been similar to Chopin's (Prochazka, p. 70). He had not much execution, but, like Schubert, could make the keys sing.

To musicians this constitutes one of the supreme charms of his art.

There is another harmonic feature which would have interested and thrilled even Schubert—his modulations. Franz knew very well that "as a rule modulation determines the emotional development much more than the melody does," for these are his own words, written in a letter to Liszt. Some of his most original modulations occur toward the end of *Das ist ein Brausen und Heulen*. Of the many other instances that might be referred to, let me call attention to one only. Can anybody sing or play *Ich hab' in deinem Auge** without having all his nerves tingle with delight when he comes to the harmonies accompanying the words *und wie die Rosen zerstieben, Ihr Abglanz ewig neu*—especially at *ewig* (eternal), where the music seems to come through a sudden opening in heaven?

Like Wagner, furthermore, Franz always had an emotional reason for his modulations and did not seek them for mere effect—as so many present-day song-writers do, merely to make their accompaniments piquant. The same is true of the other factors of his art. As Liszt has pointed out, "the choice of the key, of the measure,

* Printed in vol. ii., p. 66, of the Ditson edition.

of the rhythm, the figure of accompaniment, the conduct of the voices on the monophonic or polyphonic side, never appear accidental or arbitrary," but grow out of the structure and the mood of the poem. Hence it was that he objected so violently to transpositions of his songs into other keys. "When I am dead," he wrote to the publisher Sander, "I cannot do anything to prevent this; but as long as I live I shall fight against it;" and Prochazka says that when some publishers nevertheless issued editions of transposed *Lieder*, Franz protested vigorously, repudiating all responsibility and even the authorship of the songs in that form. The reader will understand this attitude if he will transpose some of the songs—especially those in five or six flats or sharps—into other keys. It seems like altering the colors of a painting. "Transposing," he explained to Waldmann, "cannot do any harm in the case of songs in which the vocal part is everything, the accompaniment mere harmonic padding; but that is not the case with my songs. They are written for low soprano and should be sung as written."*

* Franz was, of course, right, yet half a loaf is better than no bread, and amateur contraltos will find these songs enchanting even when transposed, though they may have lost some of their peculiar emotional atmosphere and beauty of tonal coloring.

While Franz was preëminently modern in his use of modulations, as well as in his idiomatic piano style and his declamatory treatment of the vocal part, there are some other modern aspects of music in which he diverged from his contemporaries. Though he lived in an age of dramatic music, the dramatic style had no allurements for him. He not only declared that the opera is "a lie," but in his own field he had no use for such a thing as a dramatic ballad. His songs, as we should expect under such circumstances, are usually short and strophic, few of them being through-composed in the dramatic manner. In other words, instead of writing new music for each stanza of a poem, he prefers to repeat the same music, introducing, however, slight changes in melody or harmony where an emotional modulation in the poem calls for them, and these changes are often of striking beauty. Like Chopin, he is particularly fond of introducing dainty *nuances* in the final bars of a piece, and many of his postludes are of ravishing effect, too. To Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, and Franz belongs the honor of having abolished the monotonous, stereotyped manner of ending compositions which the German "classical" school had imported from Italy.

Tone-painting is another modern trait with

which Franz had little sympathy. Compare, for instance, the opening bars of his splendid song, *Das ist ein Brausen und Heulen*, with Liszt's transcription of the same for piano, and note how much more realistic the suggestion of autumn wind and rain is in Liszt's version than in the original. In *Ach wenn ich nur ein Immchen wär'* (*Oh, were I but a little bee*) the accompaniment has an almost buzzing character, and there are a few other instances of realism; * but, as a rule, Franz does not try to suggest visible things, but to paint moods, as Beethoven said he did in the "Pastoral Symphony."

In one respect Franz labored under a delusion which some of his admirers seem to share. One of his favorite ideas was that whereas Schubert is always Schubert, his own songs—especially those which resemble simple folk-songs and are set to Russian, Bohemian, Norwegian, or Scotch poems—sound like the songs of those countries. He was mistaken. It is possible to discover in some of Schubert's songs traces of the Hungarian music which he heard during his two sojourns with the Esterhazys;

* Regarding his *Vorüber der Mai*, he said to Waldmann: "You will see that in the accompaniment there is always a note a third above the melody. It is as if the melody went along under a leaden roof in accordance with the mood."

but Franz is always Franz, and always German. I cannot find any traces of local or national color in these quasi-folk-songs of his; though some of them are otherwise charming. His settings of the poems of Burns not only do not suggest Scotch music, but they are by no means among his best productions. Success in reproducing local and national color is one of the peculiarities of modern music, and Franz's failure in this direction marks a third trait in which he differed from his contemporaries.

While Franz thus has his shortcomings as well as his merits, there is a point of view from which he ranks above all other song-writers. The proportion of good songs to poor ones is much larger in his case than in that of any other composer. Many of Schubert's songs (partly owing to the fact that such a large number of them were written before he was out of his teens) are of interest only to special students of the development of his genius; while among Schumann's two hundred and forty-five songs we found only twenty that can be called first-class. Franz wrote only thirty-four more songs than Schumann, two hundred and seventy-nine in all; but among those there are ten times as many good ones as in Schumann's list. I once took vol. i. of the Ditson edition of Franz and

prefixed a star to all the songs in it that embody ideas which will make them live. Counting them, I found that I had marked forty-eight out of the fifty-five songs in the book; and nine of them seemed to me so superlatively good that I marked them, Baedeker style, with two stars.* This volume, to be sure, contains selections; but the proportion of great songs is not much smaller if we take them in regular order.

If Schumann was compelled to write regarding the first twelve songs of Franz, that were he to dwell on all the exquisite details he would never come to an end, it is obviously impossible in the limited space at my command to even hint at the beauties of the complete list of his two hundred and seventy-nine *Lieder*. On many of them I feel tempted to bestow superlatives of praise; but, after all, is it not infinitely better to sing the songs than to write or read about them? The wisest thing I can do is to advise every one to get the Ditson, Peters, *and* Breitkopf & Härtel editions, go over the whole collections, mark the best songs and sing them over and over again. Those who have never done this will marvel at the

* These nine are *Ein Friedhof, Widmung, Im Walde, Fur Musik, Das ist ein Brausen und Heulen, Im Mai, Bitte, Ich hab in dienem Auge, Der junge Tag erwacht.*

treasures buried amid these pages,* as well as at the obtuseness of Franz's contemporaries who had no use for these treasures, and wanted him to write bigger things—as if art were to be measured with a yardstick. He wrote few songs during the last twenty years of his life. Why should he have written more, since so little interest was shown in the large number he had already produced?

BRAHMS

Hamburg gave birth to two of the most popular composers of the nineteenth century—Felix Mendelssohn (1809), and Johannes Brahms (1833). Brahms, too, might have borne the name of Felix, for he also was specially favored by fortune. He was only twenty years old when Schumann once more took up his rusty critical pen and astonished the world by an-

* Some of the songs are not yet issued in the albums. The two Kistner albums do not include opus 52, issued by the same publishers in sheet-music form, in which I have marked *Wolle Keiner mich fragen* with two stars. A few others of my two-star songs are: *Entschluss*, *Ich will meine Seele tauchen* (with a wondrous tenor melody in the piano part), *Es ragt der alte Eborus*, of opus 43 (Kistner, vol. ii.), *Wonne der Wehmuth*, *Es hat die Rose sich beklagt*, *Die Schlanke Wasserlilie*, *Wandl' ich in dem Wald des Abends* (Ditson, vol. ii.); *Mädchen mit dem rothen Mündchen* (Peters, vol. i.).

nouncing the advent of a genius of the first order, born, Minerva-like, in full armor and destined to lead music into new paths. The letters written by Schumann about this time* (when his growing mental infirmity had compelled him to give up his position as musical director at Düsseldorf) leave no doubt that his enthusiasm for young Brahms and his works was sincere, and not inspired by jealous eagerness to find a new rival to Wagner, as some have suspected. Nevertheless, Wagner was responsible, indirectly, for much of the notoriety won by Brahms. Notwithstanding the hyperbolic indorsement of Schumann, Brahms did not come into vogue at once, and it was not till it occurred to his admirers to pit him against Wagner that he began to loom up as a big man. The leader of this movement was the influential and witty Viennese critic, Dr. Hanslick, Wagner's most rabid opponent, who put Brahms on his banner and for decades bestowed on him the most "preposterous overpraise."† In England another violent enemy of Wagner and intimate friend of Brahms, Joachim, championed Brahms's cause and helped him to a temporary vogue, which made it appear as if he

* See H. Reimann's biography of Brahms, p. 8. Berlin, 1900.

† See an admirable note on the genesis of the Brahms cult, in J. F. Runciman's *Old Scores and New Readings*, pp. 241–247.

had taken the place of Felix Mendelssohn. Thus it came about that all those who hated Wagner—a large number in those days—flocked about the new banner. Brahms himself, being endowed with a keen sense of humor, knew that many of his pretended admirers did not understand his music at all; and he once fooled one of these hypocrites by making him roll his eyes in ecstasy over a vulgar Gungl march which he played for him as his own composition. What with these and his many sincere admirers, Brahms had a large following; and when he died in 1897 he left two hundred thousand florins ($80,000), the profits on the sale of his compositions.

It was a very clever bit of strategy thus to pit Brahms against Wagner, for it gave him a prominence which otherwise he would never have had. From any other point of view it was palpably absurd to oppose these two men to each other; for there was absolutely no occasion for rivalry between them. They worked in entirely different fields, Wagner bestowing all his attention on opera, while Brahms detested opera almost as much as Franz did, and wrote symphonies, songs, and chamber-music. The men properly to oppose to Brahms were Franz and Rubinstein. In chamber-music Brahms holds his own against any modern

rival; but his symphonies, while cleverly constructed, have not one tithe of the *ideas* to be found in Rubinstein's Dramatic and Ocean symphonies, and the same lack of ideas we note in his songs, as compared with Franz's. Yet Brahms's symphonies and songs are to-day on all concert programmes, while Franz and Rubinstein are neglected. But it will not remain so. There was a time when Hegel was so popular that the Berlin students used to crawl through the windows to make sure of getting a seat in his lecture-room; while Schopenhauer—who had more *ideas* than all other German philosophers put together—was ignored. To-day Schopenhauer's works are scattered broadcast in hundreds of thousands of volumes, while Hegel has become a mere name and it is difficult to get copies of his works. Read Brahms for Hegel, Franz for Schopenhauer, and you will have a glimpse of the music of the future.

Ideas alone confer immortality on works of art; and genius might be defined as the faculty for originating ideas. Form is only the dress for ideas. Brahms was a great dress-maker—a musical Worth. No one ever knew better than he how to cut and shape musical garments and to trim them with elegant variations. But his faculty for originating ideas was weak and, therefore, he is not an immortal.

The art of dress-making can be taught and acquired, but ideas come from heaven. There is no formal defect in the songs of Reichardt, Zelter, Zumsteeg that could have prevented them from living always. They have perished because so few ideas were embodied in them; and for the same reason Brahms's songs will perish, when the finish of their dress no longer attracts attention. I do not deny that there are many interesting details in these songs —quaint rhythmic combinations, often original, and fine harmonies which, however, can usually be traced back to Bach, Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, and sometimes to Wagner. But his melodic faculty is lamentably weak. Tchaikovsky doubtless went too far when he wrote * that Brahms was altogether incapable of melodic invention. I could point out some new melodies in his works, several of them of ravishing beauty, but there are not enough of these to atone for the melodic barrenness and triviality of the others. No doubt there is in his songs plenty of broad, flowing melody calculated to please the singers as well as the audiences; nor do I deny that Brahms's melody is, as Professor Niecks puts it, "distinguished by purity, simplicity, naturalness, and grace." What I main-

* *Musikalische Erinnerungen*, p. 34.

tain is that it is not new, not original. To come across a new Schubert or a Franz song is like seeing a new kind of a flower, whereas Brahms's melodies are only new tints or slight variations of flowers you have seen a hundred times before. In other words, his melodies—and usually his harmonies too—are like the musical small-talk of Mendelssohn, provokingly trite and commonplace. I am often amazed that he should have been willing to pen and print such meaningless twaddle. But he did not write in vain, for there is a surprisingly large number of persons who cannot tell the difference between musical small-talk and music which embodies new ideas. Many even prefer the small-talk. They do not care if a melody is original, so it be singable and loud enough, and not too much buried in the piano part. Such persons may derive much pleasure from Brahms; while, on the other hand, musical experts cannot fail to admire his technical virtuosity, which puts him on a level with the great masters.

Brahms wrote one hundred and ninety-six songs for one voice, with piano-forte, to verses by fifty-nine different poets. He was careful in the choice of his poems, but unable to infuse their moods into his music. Emotional characterization is a thing rarely to be found in his songs. He seems to have but one mood for

love, for nature, for joy, for sorrow; and usually the feeling is but skin-deep. His admirers often place him above Schumann; but, as Professor Niecks asks pertinently, "Do we find in his music Schumann's glow of feeling, fragrance of poetry; in short, his magic of romance?" I cannot agree with Dr. Reimann that Brahms's best works are his songs. To me they seem his least successful efforts. He was an instrumentalist by nature, not a born writer for voice. His vocal part is often conceived instrumentally; and like the old "classical" writers, to whom he hearkens back so much, he adapts the verses to his music rather than *vice versa*, as is done by the true song-writer, who, as Franz said, "makes the music grow out of the text." In one thing only does Brahms surpass Franz: in "liberating the melody," to quote Dr. Reimann, "from the monopoly of the traditional four-bar formation of periods."

The most popular of the Brahms songs are not always the best. Singers favor them because they show off their voices to advantage. Perhaps the one most frequently sung is the *Vergebliches Ständchen*, which appears to me as commonplace in its music as it is indelicate in its verses. The *Sapphische Ode* and *Feldeinsamkeit* are not much better musically; nor can I understand the admiration which many profess

for the *Magellonen* cyclus. *Liebestreu* is a good song and *Wie bist du meine Königin* is better still; but the best by far of all his songs, in my opinion, is the *Minnelied.** Concert singers neglect it, because its chief beauty is in the piano part. But it is an adorable song, which I love almost as much as my Schubert and Franz favorites. I have often been told by Brahmsites that I should live to like all his music after hearing it oftener. But the more I hear it the less I like it, with the exception of a few things, like this *Minnelied*, which I loved at first hearing.

JENSEN AND OTHERS

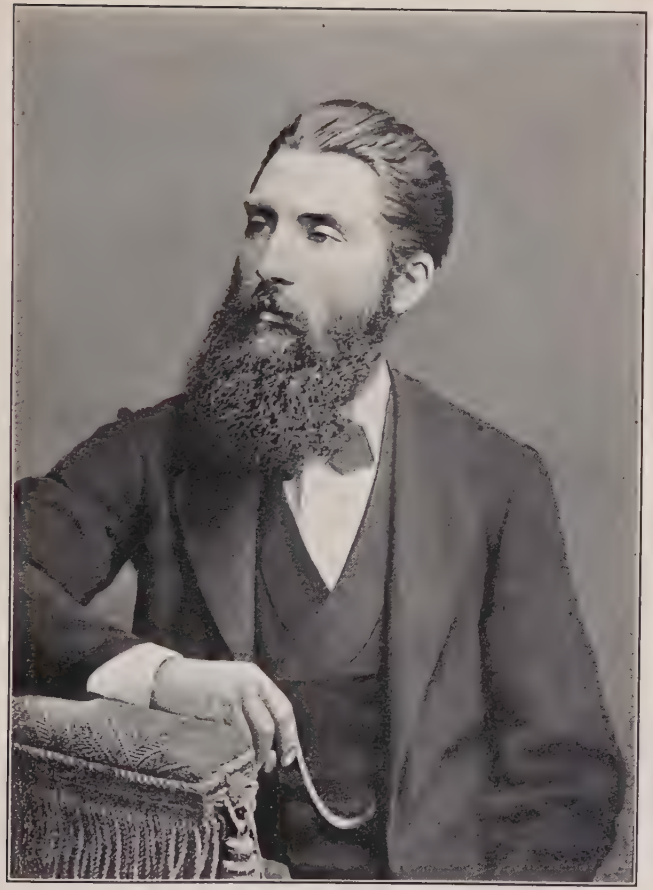
Unlike Brahms and Mendelssohn, Adolf Jensen (1837–1879) enjoyed less than his just share of popularity and prosperity. His short life was a perpetual struggle against poverty and ill health; and it is pathetic to read of his great disappointment at not being able to hear the first performance of Wagner's *Meistersinger* in

* Printed in vol. iii. of the *Ausgewählte Lieder;* Berlin: Simrock. German, English, and French words. The German publishers of Brahms have not yet issued any comprehensive albums, but only groups of five to fifteen. An album of twenty-seven selected Brahms songs, with excellent English translations of the text, is published by Novello, Ewer & Co. This includes only the earlier works, op. 3–19.

Munich, simply because the opera was postponed and he had not the means to remain longer.* His enthusiasm for Wagner belongs, however, to a later period in his life. His first thirty-five songs were written under the influence of Schumann—whom he adored and corresponded with—and of whom they are often reminiscent. During a sojourn of two years (1858–59) in Copenhagen he was intimate with Gade, and thus came more or less under Mendelssohnian influences; while Schubert had been one of his first favorites. Though he wrote many pieces for the piano-forte, some of them of great charm and worth, he was, like Schubert and Franz, led to the *Lied* by a special instinct; and the songs he wrote—about one hundred and sixty in number—constitute the bulk of his work.

Together with other modern song-writers, he has been accused of making his piano parts too difficult and too prominent in relation to the voice; but this is an error. He was a born composer for the voice; and, like Schubert, he could not help making even his piano pieces songs without words. I agree with Mr. Elson in thinking that "Jensen's songs will take higher rank than has hitherto been accorded

* See my *Wagner and His Works*, vol. ii., 137.



JENSEN.

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them." Dr. Riemann goes so far as to say that, "with far more justice than Robert Franz, Jensen must be pronounced the heir of Schumann as regards the *Lied;* though he cannot be accused of being an imitator."

Jensen's activity as a song-writer may be divided into two periods, roughly representing the years before and after Wagner had taken possession of his soul. One of his songs, which everybody knows, is *Lehn deine Wang' an meine Wang'* (*Oh! press thy cheek against my cheek*). This has been charged with over-sentimentality; but I cannot see anything maudlin in it. It is sound music, full of healthy emotion, the melody effective, and the harmonies as stirring as those in Schumann's *Ich grolle nicht,* to which it is not in any way inferior. It is one of my favorite songs, and it should be marked in a song-Baedeker with two stars. It appeared in opus 1, dedicated to Louis Ehlert. Among other works of the ante-Wagner period may be mentioned the love-songs of opus 6, embodying personal experiences and emotions, the seven "Spanish" songs of opus 4, and the Hafis songs, opus 11, which Hans von Bülow considered the best of his songs up to 1863. Among these early songs—and the later ones, too—there are not a few that must be called mediocre; but the excellence of the others atones for them.

In the year of the first Bayreuth festival Jensen wrote to a friend regarding Wagner: "The art-work of this man has occupied my attention for years, and almost absorbed me." In 1870 he had secured a copy of *Tristan und Isolde*, and, as he wrote to a friend, "for a week I revelled in ecstasy over it without getting to the end of the first act." Concerning his own songs embodied in op. 40 and 41 he wrote: "In these songs you will seek in vain for the former gushing Jensen, who is no more. Earth grips me once more. My great, venerated master, Richard Wagner, lies deep at the bottom of my heart." The *Lieder* which specially benefited by the influence of Wagner are the *Dolorosa* and *Gaudeamus* groups, op. 30 and 40, and the English songs of op. 49–53. Wagner's superb harmonies did not allure him to copy them; they rather served as a stimulus to original work, and assisted in the development of a dramatic vein which had always existed in him and which sometimes suggests Schubert.

This dramatic style is particularly noticeable in the Cunningham and Scott ballads, included among his English songs, which he wrote at Graz. These English songs must be specially commended to amateurs and professionals. They are settings of seven poems by Burns, seven by Moore, four by Cunningham, six by

Scott, six by Tennyson and Felicia Hemans—thirty in all.* By way of illustrating Jensen's conscientiousness, Niggli informs us † that when he composed these songs he consulted four translations, besides the originals. He was particularly proud of these songs, which he referred to in 1877 as "my last and grandest excursion in the land of song."

It was the dramatic impulse in Jensen that made him usually avoid strophic repetition and compose his verses in detail. Another respect in which he differed from his contemporary, Franz, was that, as he confessed in one of his letters, he had not much belief in the special characteristics of the keys; and, therefore, did not seriously object to transpositions of his songs for a lower voice. He preferred, however, to do the transposing himself, altering the chords so as to make them sound well in the lower position.

With Jensen we have entered the Wagnerian

* Some of the best of them are included in the 12 *Lieder und Gesänge* von Jensen in the Hainauer edition (German and English words). Particularly good are *My heart is in the Highlands*, *When through the Piazzetta*, *Row gently here*, *my gondolier*, *Slumber Song*, and *The Village Chime*. The album in the Peters edition contains earlier songs—*Lehn deine Wang*,' seven of the "Spanish," etc.

† *Adolf Jensen*, von Arnold Niggli. Berlin, 1900. This is the only book so far written on Jensen.

period of German song. Before considering that period, a word must, however, be said concerning the minor composers of the preceding epoch which we have been considering in this chapter. Nearly every German composer wrote some *Lieder*, even those who, like Meyerbeer and Raff, are known almost exclusively by their operas or their instrumental works. Some composers, like Abt, Proch, Küchen, Gumbert, enjoyed for a generation or two a great vogue with their songs, which occupy a place half-way between the folk-song and the artistic *Lied*. Sentimentality, tunefulness, and sprightly rhythms are their specialties. Of the four named Abt is the best. His *When the Swallows Homeward Fly* is almost as well known everywhere as *Home Sweet Home*.

The songs of such writers as Lachner, Hauptmann, Dorn, Rietz, Reinecke, Eckert, Curschmann, Reissiger, come for the most part under the head of what Wagner called *Kapellmeistermusik:* music such as every conductor is expected to write to show that he knows his trade; though he may not have an idea in his head. On a somewhat higher level are the songs of such men as Kirchner and Taubert; yet their productions, too, were ephemeral. They have had their day and can never be revived, though

their best productions may be saved from the general wreck.*

WAGNER, STRAUSS, AND OTHERS

When Richard Wagner was twenty-six years old he went to Paris in the expectation of winning fame and fortune there, as Gluck, Meyerbeer, and other Germans had done. The Parisians, however, had no use for him; and during the two years and a half he spent in their city he was often on the verge of starvation.† In every way possible to a musician he tried to earn his daily bread, but failed in almost every effort. Seeing that composers who had not a tithe of his talent prospered by the writing of songs, he tried his luck in that line, too. The result was a setting of Heine's *The Two Grenadiers*, Ronsard's *Dors mon enfant*, and Victor Hugo's *Attente*. He hoped that these songs might be sung in salons, and perchance occasion some manager to ask him to write an opera.

* A good idea of the *Lieder* under consideration may be obtained by securing one or more of the collections published by Breitkopf & Härtel. No. 290 contains one hundred songs by forty composers, No. 384 one hundred songs by forty-one composers. Nos. 180 and 352 are similar collections.

† For details of the pathetic story see my *Wagner and his Works*, vol. i., pp. 65–92.

But no singer, manager, or publisher paid the least attention to them; and he was finally compelled to offer them to the editor of a periodical in Germany for a maximum sum of $4 apiece.

Heine himself made the French translation of his *The Two Grenadiers* for Wagner. Schumann has often been praised for his "happy thought" in introducing the *Marseillaise* in his setting of the same poem; but the happy thought was Wagner's; his song was composed in 1839 while Schumann's was not given to the world till 1844. Schumann, however, assigns the French patriotic air to the singer, while Wagner has it only in the accompaniment, and his setting of the poem is in most other respects inferior to Schumann's. More meritorious, with some characteristic Wagnerian touches, are the other songs named. In the year following these he composed some peculiarly lugubrious music to *Der Tannenbaum*, a poem by Scheuerlein, which shows us a boat on a lake, with a boy in it, who asks a stately fir-tree on the shore why it looks down on him so gloomily; and the fir-tree responds: "Because already the axe is on its way to cut me for your coffin." *

More than twenty years later (1862) Wagner

* This song is issued with the three French ones in Fürstner's edition. The five songs of 1862 are printed (with German and English words) by Schott.

composed five songs entitled, *Der Engel, Stehe Still, Im Treibhaus, Schmerzen, Träume.* The first and fourth have some interesting modulations, without being otherwise remarkable. In the second half of *Stehe Still* we get into the midst of Tristanesque harmonies, while *Im Treibhaus* and *Träume* are sketches for *Tristan und Isolde*, resembling the sketches great painters make for pictures. These two songs are charming and are often sung in concert-halls.

It was not by these *Lieder*, however, that Wagner exercised his sway over the song-writers of the second half of his century. If Schubert influenced the opera by his *Lieder*, Wagner, conversely, influenced the *Lied* by his operas—notably *Lohengrin, Tristan und Isolde,* and *Die Meistersinger.* Many a song-writer of our time —and not only in Germany—has evidently studied the *Tristan* score (usually in Hans von Bülow's version for piano-forte and voice) as enthusiastically as Jensen did. Love remains, as it always was, the favorite theme of song-composers; and as *Tristan und Isolde* gives expression to both the tenderness and the irresistible ardor of this passion in a way that no previous composer had approximated, it was inevitable that it should help to create a new style of love-lyrics. *Die Meistersinger*, on the other hand, showed the way to a new humorous treat-

ment of the *Lied*. Wagner's influence on the *Lied* is everywhere manifested in the adoption of his wonderfully original and expressive harmonic and modulatory system, as well as in the declamatory use of the voice after his manner, and in the tendency toward a detailed dramatic treatment of the text, giving every word its due—a tendency which reached its climax in Liszt.

Of the German song-writers who have won distinction since the death of Wagner the most interesting and important is Richard Strauss. He is still a young man, having been born in Munich in 1864; yet he is to-day the most widely discussed, the most highly lauded, and the most cordially abused of living composers. This is owing chiefly to his symphonic poems, in which programme music goes beyond even Berlioz and Liszt, and the orchestration of which out-Wagners Wagner in complexity and lavish display of color. As a song-writer he has come much into vogue in recent years; yet most of his admirers will be surprised to hear that he has already written about fifty *Lieder*.*

The first thing that strikes one about these

* They are beautifully printed in sheet-music form (with German and English words) by Jos. Aibl in Munich.

songs is their difficulty, and the composer's predilection for unusual keys. The Vienna publishers who used to object to Schubert's piano-forte parts and beg him to use easy keys with no more than three flats or sharps, would stand aghast at Richard Strauss, whose pages sometimes look like a wilderness of flats and sharps, with the head of a note timidly peeping out here and there. Familiarity, however, soon breeds contempt for these accidentals; while the songs grow more and more beautiful. The art of tonal coloring, which is so noticeable in the orchestral works of Strauss, is also applied, as far as possible, to his piano-forte parts. He is fond of surging arpeggios sweeping the key-board up and down, and producing harmonies so rich and glowing that one often feels tempted to keep the pedal down longer than necessary, and linger on the resulting chord just to enjoy its euphony. Schubert was the first who indulged in chords alluring by their euphony—color for color's sake—but he never dreamed of such orchestral glories in the piano-forte, of such arpeggios, and commingling of weird harmonies. Here are harmonies not anticipated by Bach, Chopin, or Wagner; harmonies beyond the daring of even Liszt and Grieg.

Some of these harmonies—or discords—are frankly ugly, but they are characteristic, and we

soon get to love them as we do faces that have more character than beauty. We look for something more than beauty in a man's face—why not also in a man's music? Yet beauty there is, too, in these songs—sometimes in alluring abundance, as just stated; nor is it confined to the piano part. Elaborate as the piano part is, it does not swamp the voice, which stands out as boldly as in Wagner's music-dramas *when they are properly sung and played.** These songs are not much easier for the singer than for the pianist, and they are not for bungling amateurs. Serious music-lovers may as well begin with some of the easier ones—such as *Morgen*, *Ach Lieb', ich muss nun scheiden*, *Breit über mein Haupt dein schwarzes Haar*, *Die Nacht*, *Nachtgang*, *Ach weh mir unglückhaftem Manne*—which also happen to be among the best. The appetite will soon grow for what it feeds on, and those who are not afraid of technical difficulties will have a rich menu to chose from. As regards the poems, it is self-evident that the writer of the *Zarathustra* programme makes some novel experiments in the *Lied* too. Among the songs in the comic

* Our eminent Wagnerian soprano, Mme. Nordica, has also shown herself an admirable interpreter of Richard Strauss. Her singing of the *Serenade*—one of his best songs—was one of the most enjoyable features of the musical season 1899-1900 in New York.

vein I may mention *Herr Lenz* and *Für fünfzehn Pfennige.*

Beside Strauss two other eminent contemporary conductors have written good *Lieder*—Felix Mottl and Felix Weingartner. Mottl has written about a score of songs, among which the sombre ones have found most favor. More attention has been paid to the *Lied* by Weingartner, who has written already more than seventy songs—a considerable number for one who was born as late as 1863, and who has also written several operas and orchestral works. His ballads enjoy great and deserved popularity. *Schlanke Lilien*, *Schifferliedchen*, *Frühlingsgespenster*, *Wallfahrt nach Kevlaar*, *Post im Walde*, are among his best songs. But the limits of our space do not permit of our dwelling in detail on these or on the many interesting songs written by Raff, A. von Fielitz, Eugen D'Albert, Carl Goldmark, Alexander Ritter, Albert Fuchs, Robert Kahn, M. Plüddemann, H. Behn, Hans Hermann, Hugo Wolf, A. Wallnofer, Hugo Kaun, Max Reger, J. Rheinberger, Hugo Reichenberger, Otto Naumann, R. Buck, Bruno Oscar Klein, who has written some excellent songs and properly belongs to the German-American group; etc.*

* Some information concerning most of these may be found in an article by H. Kretzschmar 'Das deutsche Lied seit dem Tode Wagner's," *Jahrbuch der Musikbibliothek Peters*, 1898.

V

Hungarian and Slavic Song-Writers

GLANCING at the table of contents of this book and noticing how many more pages are devoted to the German song-writers than to those of all other countries combined, a reader might easily think that a disproportionate amount of attention had been given to the Teutons. But that is not the case. As Liszt has remarked, "the *Lied* is poetically and musically a product peculiar to the Germanic muse." It is significant, as H. Ehrlich has said, that "*Lied* is the only purely German word in musical parlance; opera, oratorio, aria, symphony, quartet, sonata, concerto, are imported words; but *Lied* is quite German. It is also untranslatable. French and English concert announcements and criticisms now nearly always use the word *Lied*, because 'air' does not mean the same thing at all." Nevertheless, many of the best *Lieder*, or art-songs, have been written by non-Germans; but they can all be traced back to German influences. Liszt, Rubinstein, Tchaikov-

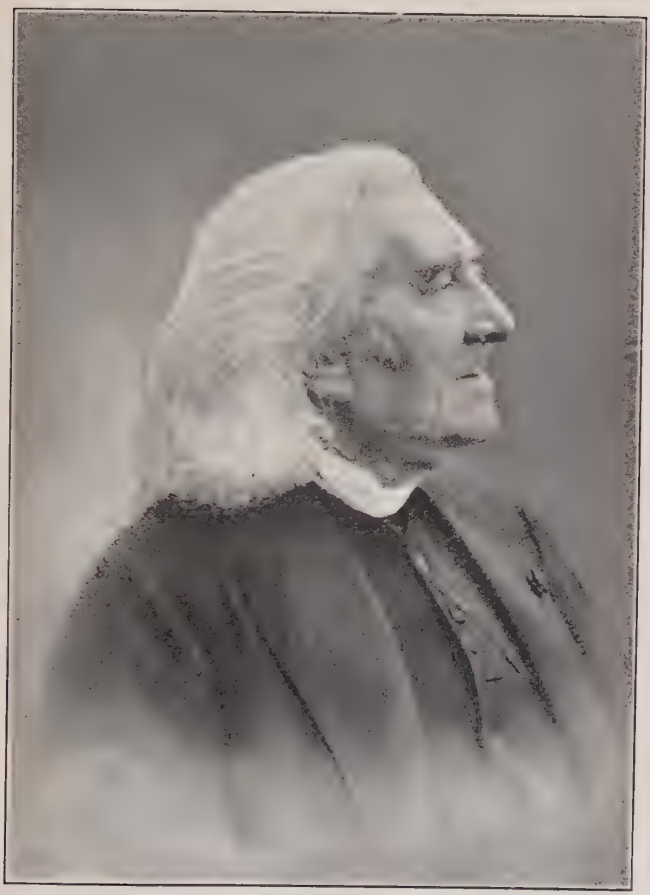
sky, Dvořák, Grieg, MacDowell, and others, probably would have written no *Lieder* at all, or quite different ones, had not Schubert, Schumann, and Franz preceded them as pioneers in this new and delightful field of music.

LISZT

Were I writing a book on folk-song, Hungary and some of the Slavic countries—especially Russia, Poland, and Bohemia—would claim much of my time and space; but as this is a history of art-song—and a mere sketch at that—mention can be made of the principal composers only: Liszt in Hungary, Rubinstein and Tchaikovsky in Russia, Chopin and Paderewski in Poland, Dvořák in Bohemia. Hungary has given birth to many eminent musicians, such as Bihary, Lavetta, Czermak, Erkel, Heller, Doppler, Remenyi, Joseffy, Joachim, Vagvölgyi, and Goldmark; but the only song-writer among them who can be ranked with the great Germans is Franz Liszt (1811–1886). In his capacity as song-composer Liszt might, indeed, have been classed with the Germans, for nearly all of his *Lieder*—fifty-one out of about sixty—were composed to German texts. It is one of the great achievements of Liszt to have introduced Magyar melodies and rhythms and gypsy-like orna-

mentation into art-music more successfully than any one else; but his instinct told him that those traits were more suitable to instrumental than to vocal music; and we find accordingly among his songs only two that have a marked Hungarian flavor: *Isten Veled* (*Farewell*) and *The Three Gypsies*, which, also, like several others of the songs, exists with an orchestral accompaniment and has become tolerably familiar in our concert-halls. The music gives as graphic a description as the poem of the three favorite Bohemian ways of "smoking, sleeping, and fiddling life away."

It is not known exactly when Liszt began to compose songs. The best of them belong to the Weimar period, when he was in the full maturity of his creative power. There are stories of songs inspired by love while he lived in Paris; and he certainly did write six settings of French songs, chiefly by Victor Hugo. These he prepared for the press in 1842. While less original in melody and modulation than the best of his German songs, they have a distinct French esprit and elegance which attest his power of assimilation and his cosmopolitanism. These French songs, fortunately for his German admirers, were translated by Cornelius. Italian leanings are betrayed by his choice of poems by Petrarch and Bocella; but, as already intimated,



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his favorite poets are Germans: Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Hoffmann von Fallersleben, Uhland, Rückert, and others. Goethe—who could not even understand Schubert, and to whom Liszt's music would have been pure Chinese—is favored by settings of *Mignon's Lied* (*Kennst du das Land*), *Es war ein König in Thule*, *Der du von dem Himmel bist*, *Ueber allen Gipfeln ist Ruh*, *Wer nie sein Brod mit Thränen ass*, *Freudvoll und leidvoll* (two versions).

Mignon was the second of his German songs, and it is the most deeply emotional of all the settings of that famous poem. Longing is its key-note; longing for blue-skyed Italy with its orange-groves, marble treasures, and other delights. One of the things which Wagner admired in Liszt's music was "the inspired definiteness of musical conception" which enabled him to concentrate his thought and feeling in so pregnant a way that one felt inclined to exclaim after a few bars, "Enough! I have it all." The opening bar of *Mignon's Lied* thus seems to condense the longing of the whole song; yet, as the music proceeds, we find it is only a prelude to a wealth of musical detail which colors and intensifies every word and wish of the poem.

The King of Thule is a ballad which would be heard a dozen times in our concert halls every

season, if singers were more enterprising and intelligent in ascertaining what is good and what the public would be sure to like. Liszt's songs are neglected by most concert-singers because in them the piano-forte part shares the honors too much to suit the notions of these vain persons regarding the importance of showing off their best notes. If they would take the pains to enter thoroughly into the spirit of his music, and try to be one with the pianist (as Vogl was with Schubert), they would find that the audience—as it does at Wagner's operas—would no longer discriminate between the voice and the "accompaniment," but would applaud the singers *for the fine effect of the combination.* To be sure, it takes an artist to play Liszt's piano parts properly. Those who have been so lucky as to hear Mr. Georg Henschel and his wife play and sing a Liszt song will never forget the treat—and the lesson. Regarding the *King of Thule*, I may add that it is exceptionally effective and "grateful" for an intelligent singer.

All of the six settings of the Goethe poems are gems, and Dr. Hueffer quite properly gave each of them a place in his collection of *Twenty Liszt Songs.** Concerning the *Wanderer's Nightsong*

* Published by Novello, Ewer & Co., with Dr. Hueffer's admirable English version. The selection is a good one, but as it

(*Ueber allen Gipfeln ist Ruh*), Dr. Hueffer has well said that Liszt has rendered the heavenly calm of the exquisite poem by his wonderful harmonies in a manner which alone would secure him a place among the great masters of German song. "Particularly the modulation from G major back into the original E major at the close of the piece, is of surprising beauty."

For composers of musical lyrics Schiller wrote much fewer available poems than Goethe. But Schubert owed to him one of his finest songs—*The Maiden's Lament.* Next to him, as an illustrator of Schiller, I feel inclined to place Liszt, who is at his best in his settings of three poems from *William Tell: The Fisher Boy*, *The Shepherd*, and *The Alpine Hunter.* Liszt, like Schubert, favors poems which bring a scene or a story vividly before the mind's eye; and he loves to write music which mirrors these pictorial features. Schubert's *Müllerlieder* seemed to have exhausted the possible ways of depicting in music the movements of the waters; but

includes only a third of the songs, vocalists should also get the *Gesammelte Lieder*, published by Kahnt (German words). Dr. Hueffer has written a few good pages on Liszt's songs in his *Wagner and the Music of the Future* (pp. 277–286), in which the elaborate comparison of Liszt's and Franz's way of treating the same poem—Heine's *Am Rhein*—is particularly instructive. A detailed description of Liszt's songs (fifty pages) has been written by Bernhard Vogel, and printed by Kahnt (1887).

listen to the rippling arpeggios in Liszt's *Fisher Boy*, embodying the acquisitions of modern pianistic technique. The shepherd's song brings before our eyes and ears the flower-meadows and the brooks of the peaceful Alpine world in summer; while the song of the hunter gives us dissolving views of destructive avalanches and appalling precipices, with sudden glimpses, through cloud-rifts, of meadows and hamlets at dizzy depths below. Wagner himself, in the grandest mountain and cloud scenes of the *Walküre* and *Siegfried*, has not written more superbly dissonant and appropriate dramatic music than has Liszt in this exciting song.

Heine was a personal friend of Liszt, and as a matter of course, some of his poems, too, were adorned with Liszt's music — six of them — *Loreley*, *Am Rhein*, *Vergiftet sind meine Lieder*, *Du bist wie eine Blume*, *Morgens steh' ich auf und frage*, *Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam.* They all abound in exquisite details of melody and harmony; but I can stop to speak of one only—*Loreley*—the first of his German songs. It is not only beautiful, musically, but it admirably illustrates Liszt's general method as a song-writer, and enables us to look back, as from a height, over the whole evolution of the song.

The charm of the fully developed mediæval folk-song lies, as we have seen, in the close

sympathy between the words and the music, both expressing the same mood. At the same time, when we examine into the matter more closely, we find that the correspondence is only a general one, and does not extend to details. There is only one melody, which is repeated stanza after stanza, no matter how much the story may change. Thus it may happen in a long ballad that the same music is used to illustrate successively scenes of love and hatred, of peace and war; which, of course, is inartistic. *It is here that the art-song improves on the folk-song* by adopting the method of through-composing: making the music change as the words change. Schubert was the first who realized the full importance of this method, and embodied it in immortal songs. But he does not often go so far as to resort to word-painting—making the music follow individual words—and he usually retains the concise strophic form.

In these respects Liszt goes beyond Schubert and his followers, and represents the extreme development of the tendency which differentiates the art-song from the folk-song. He not only makes the music adopt the hue of each significant phrase and word, but in his best and most elaborate songs he ignores the strophic form of the poem—as Wagner gave up the symmetrical airs and other set forms that used

to make up the operatic mosaic—and gives us, in place of that symmetrical form, a continuous musical plot from the structure of which all remains of the original dance-form of the folk-song are eliminated—for it is well known that, originally, all vocal music was dance-music.

Loreley presents a striking instance of Liszt's method. It is no wonder that his novel treatment of Heine's famous poem should have aroused surprise—nay, indignation; for hitherto the Germans had always sung this poem to Silcher's popular air, which was repeated without change in the six stanzas. Even that early champion of the "music of the future," Dr. Hueffer, while admitting the beauty and expressiveness of Liszt's song, declared that for such a poem Silcher's simple tune seemed more appropriate than Liszt's elaborate dramatic treatment of the subject. I cannot agree with him. Heine's poem is, indeed, as simple as any strophic folk-song; but, after all, what gives it its poetic value is not its metric structure and rhyme, but its subject. It presents a series of poetic pictures: a complete miniature drama is enacted before our eyes; and Liszt translates this into music. His pensive opening bars are a prelude to the poet's query why he feels so sad to-day, and why a legend of old times keeps lingering in his mind. Then we get a

vision of the calmly flowing Rhine, with gently undulating music; and in the twilight we behold the maiden sitting on the rocks, combing her golden hair. She sings a song which has a strange melody—a most seductive song in Liszt's version. The boatman passing in his skiff below is entranced; a wild longing seizes his soul; he gazes fixedly at the maiden above, heedless of the dangerous rocks about him; and her song is to blame if the waves at last engulf him with his boat.

By converting this miniature tragedy into a music-drama, Liszt has done infinitely more than Silcher did with his changeless air, pretty though it is. He shatters the strophic form; but what a wealth of beauty and emotion he gives us in return! In place of Silcher's unchanging air — a genuine folk-song — he gives us several melodies of, at least, equal beauty; and, the most important point of all, while Silcher's tune, like other folk-songs, has only the simplest and most commonplace accompaniment, Liszt makes use of all those harmonic and modulatory acquisitions which enable the composer to express the deeper and more subtle emotions, and which constitute the *second and greatest advantage of art-music over folk-music.* For these various reasons, though each is charming in its way, I would not give

Liszt's *Loreley* for a dozen like Silcher's. It symbolizes the difference between music which has only melody, and music which adds to melody the infinitely varied charm and emotional power of harmony. The melody of folk-songs has delighted and influenced some of the greatest composers—men like Weber, Haydn, Schubert, Liszt, Chopin, Dvořák, Grieg—but all these masters have written greater things than folk-songs, because they had the resources of harmony as well as of melody to inspire them.

With Liszt the development of the *Lied* reached its end, apparently. Other composers have since written beautiful and great songs; but they are important and valuable only as emanations of individual genius, not as marking new phases in the evolution of song.

RUBINSTEIN

When Liszt's songs were first printed they were generally reviewed unfavorably, so far as they received any notice at all. The attitude of the critics was summed up in the advice of one of them—that young composers should study them in order to find out "how not to do it." Anton Rubinstein (1830–1894) was another composer with whom the Philistine critics were never satisfied. But while the hostility toward

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Liszt was due chiefly to his daring innovations, especially in matters of form and harmony, Rubinstein came under the ban for quite different reasons. He hated the music of Liszt and Wagner as the devil hates holy-water; and he was a good deal like Mendelssohn—a romanticist with a strong leaning toward the classical schools of the past. Why, then, was he abused by these same critics? Because, as they said, he was so careless in his workmanship, and did not sufficiently file his pieces. As Professor Niecks has said, "he seems to be always impatient to finish a thing."

It is quite true that Rubinstein was not a flawless artist; and that, if genius is the capacity for taking infinite pains, he was not a genius. But if this definition were true, every German professor would be a genius. In reality, genius is very rare among German professors. But if genius is, as I have defined it, the faculty for creating new ideas, then Rubinstein was not only a genius, but a genius of a very high order. In the realm of harmony he was less original than some of his contemporaries; but as a fertile melodist he has had few equals at any time. He was a good deal like Schubert in both his merits and his faults; and I suspect that he had himself in mind when he wrote that "God made woman, undoubtedly the most

beautiful of created things, *but full of shortcomings;* he did not file at her, being convinced that her faults would be annulled by her charms. So it is with Schubert; his melodies atone for all blemishes, if there really are any."

Rubinstein is right. The constant critical harping or parroting on Schubert's real and fancied shortcomings has for a long time blinded the world as to his very high rank. Too frequent insistence on Rubinstein's undeniable faults has had the same effect in his case. Here lies the explanation of a great mystery. The public loves, above all things, melody, and Rubinstein is brimful of melody; why, then, is he not heard oftener in our concert-halls? He is neglected there, I answer, not because the public does not want him, but because the professionals, with their minds fixed on his (absurdly exaggerated) imperfections, refuse to perform him. I know from long experience that whenever his works are given they are enthusiastically applauded; yet the performers perversely hold back, intimidated, apparently, by the critics. But Rubinstein's day will come. It would have come ere this, had it not been for his blind and foolish rage against Wagner, the idol of our time, which prejudiced many and deterred them from examining his own works.

Songs being short, Rubinstein had less temptation in them than in his larger works for "getting impatient" and doing slovenly work in patches. Consequently it is here that we find many of his brightest inspirations. Not all of his one hundred and fifty-five songs, by any means, are inspired; a considerable proportion, as in the case of Schubert and Schumann, should never have been printed. But the number of good ones is large, and the best of them have a charm which should be proclaimed from the house-tops. Everybody, of course, knows the superb *The Asra*, *Yellow Rolls at my Feet*, and *A Flower Thou Resemblest;* but these are no better than a score or two of the others. The most quaint and original of them all are comprised in opus 34, in which are set to music twelve Persian poems of Bodenstedt ("Mirza-Schaffy").* These are remarkable not only for their melodic freshness and interesting piano parts, but for their piquant Oriental coloring

* They are included (German and English words) in Kistner's Rubinstein Album; also in Augener's collection of fifty-eight Rubinstein songs (same languages). Seven of them are in the Novello Rubinstein album, with Dr. Hueffer's admirable translations into English. Three further volumes of Rubinstein's songs are published by Senff. Attention should also be called to Rubinstein's duos, many of which are admirable and most effective for private or public performance.

as revealed chiefly in the unusual melodic intervals. Hans von Bülow thought it strange that Rubinstein should have been able to conceive in his own mind such "Persian" coloring. But Rubinstein did not originate these quaint intervals and turns; they are characteristic of Oriental music in general, the song of the priestess in Verdi's *Aïda* being a charming instance. Rubinstein's Hebrew blood made it the more easy for him to assimilate such Orientalism. It is needless to name the other gems, such as the delightful Spanish *Ring Thou My Pandero*, or *The Dew Drops Glitter*, *The Earth at Rest*, *The Angel*, *Good Night*, *The Tear*, *Spring Song*, *Morning Song*, the songs of opus 72, etc. Every singer, amateur or professional, owes it to himself and to his hearers to have them in his repertory. In my opinion a composer like Rubinstein, whose workmanship is sometimes careless, but who bubbles over with ideas, is infinitely superior to a Brahms whose workmanship is flawless but who has an idea only once a month.

TCHAIKOVSKY AND DVOŘÁK.

The Oriental coloring in some of Rubinstein's songs did not save him from being dubbed a "German" by the Chauvinists of the neo-Russian school. Nor did Peter Iljitch Tchaik-

ovsky (1840–1893) escape the terrible accusation of not being a genuine Russian in his music. There is, indeed, less of the national Russian flavor in his music than in that of the neo-Russians—Cui, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakoff, Balakireff, and others. But like Rubinstein, he differs from these neo-Russians in having genius; and for that reason we must give him a paragraph here. Few are aware that he wrote a large number of songs—eighty-four, or, including sixteen *chansons enfantines*, just one hundred.* They cover the whole period of his creative activity, the first group being opus 6, the last opus 73; and, as in the case of most composers, the later ones are much superior to the earlier ones.† My favorite among them all occurs in opus 65. It is as simple as a folk-song —indeed it has the flavor of a true Russian folk-song—but the harmonic genius of the composer of the *Pathetic Symphony* is evident in every bar. It is almost as sad as that symphony, and its title is *Enttäuschung* (*Disappointment*). Among

*See the *Catalogue Thematique*, published by Jurgenson, Moscow.

†Most of the Tchaikovsky songs are still published singly or in groups of six, seven, and twelve, by Fürstner, Drahtner, and others, with German and Russian or German and English words. The Novellos publish a selection of twenty-four, Englished by Lady Macfarren, which is a good one to begin with.

others I may mention the *Spanish Serenade*, *Why so Pale Are the Roses*, *None but a Lonely Heart* (very fine), *The Song that You Sang Long Ago*, *Canary Bird*, *Invocation to Sleep*, *The Czar's Drinking-House*.

While greatly admiring many of Tchaikovsky's songs, I admit that I do not think that, as a rule, he has given us his best in them; having reserved his most original and pregnant musical ideas for his orchestral works, which to-day are second in popularity to none. The same criticism applies to another deservedly popular composer of our time, the Bohemian Dr. Antonin Dvořák (born in 1841). His *New World* symphony (written during the years that he presided over Mrs. Thurber's National Conservatory in New York) and many of his other orchestral works bubble over with fresh and bright melody and novel harmonic progressions; but, like Wagner, he seems to need the glowing color-possibilities of an orchestra to stimulate his fancy to its finest flights. He apparently discovered this himself, as songs are much more numerous in his early period—the opus numbers from 2 to 17 include twenty-seven *Lieder*—than in the later ones. At the same time there is much that is attractive in some of these songs, and it is unfair to neglect them. In the Novello album of sixteen Dvořák songs special attention

may be called to *Go Forth, My Song, Naught to My Heart Can Bring Relief, Rest in the Valley, The Cuckoo, Visions of Heaven, Like to a Linden Tree.* In most of his songs Dvořák writes like a German rather than like a Bohemian. He laid on more ethnical coloring in his *Gypsy Songs*, which won immediate popularity, and in which he uses the quaint gypsy rhythms and melodic intervals with great success. It is a pity he has not written more specifically Bohemian songs.

CHOPIN AND PADEREWSKI

Poland is preëminently the land of pianists, and Polish music seems to us rather instrumental than vocal in character, on account of its peculiar intervals and exotic dance rhythms. Yet we owe to Poland a score or so of the most delightful of all songs. When Chopin was a boy he often listened to the songs of the peasants, wondering who had created them. To-day the Polish peasants sing many songs which they attribute to him, probably incorrectly. The only ones certainly written by him are the *Seventeen Polish Songs* embodied in opus 74. Professor Niecks makes the amazing assertion in his work on Chopin (vol. ii., p. 271) that these songs may attract the attention of the lover and student of Chopin's music, but that they add

"little value to Chopin's musical legacy;" and he refers to Nos. 1, 5, 8, 4, and 12, as being decidedly commonplace. I say, on the contrary that if *The Maiden's Wish* and the *Bacchanal* are commonplace, then every folk-song ever written in any country is commonplace. More spontaneous, fresh, charming folk-melodies were never conceived anywhere. No. 5, *What a Maiden Likes* has, I admit, little merit; nor do I care for No. 7, *The Messenger*. But No. 8, *My Beloved* is not uninteresting, and in No. 12 (*My Delights*) we have one of the most impassioned and dramatic lyrics ever created. It is one of my favorite songs; and I once saw a young lady faint, overcome by the intense emotion embodied in it. In all music, lyric or dramatic, the thrill of a kiss has never been expressed so ecstatically as in the twelve bars included in the *cresc. sempre piu accelerando.**

* It would seem incredible that any one should pronounce such a master-song "decidedly commonplace," were it not for the fact that Niecks's two volumes are full of such preposterous opinions. It is, indeed, a calamity that the task of writing the most elaborate work on the life and compositions of Chopin should have fallen into such hands. His book will have to be superseded by another of the same scope; the sooner the better. Mr. Huneker's *Chopin: The Man and His Music*, is much more commendable; but it gives a mere sketch of the life, and there is, therefore, room for another and exhaustive volume. I may add that Liszt—whose taste in making selections from the works of others is universally ad-

Though there are only seventeen Chopin songs, their emotional range is wider than that of not a few composers who have written more than a hundred. Some, as just stated, are as simple as folk-songs. To this class belongs, also, No. 2, *Spring*. The plaintive No. 3 is less tuneful, but nearly as simple. The *Bacchanal* is as full of animal spirits as a German students' song, and the accompaniment is harmonically interesting. More delightful still is the accompaniment of No. 6, especially on the last page; while the melody has the flow, breadth, and variety of Schubert at his best. Broadly melodious, too, is No. 8; while No. 9, though entitled *A Melody*, gives more the impression of an ardent, pathetic recitative with an accompaniment that Schubert or Wagner could not have made more dramatic. Highly dramatic, also, is the treatment of No. 15, representing a storm in the forest, and of No. 10, *The Horseman before the Battle*. In great contrast to these is No. 14, *The Ring*, in slow waltz-time — perhaps the most popular of these songs. There is national color and realism in the *Lithuanian Song*, No. 16; No. 13 is appropriately named *Melancholy*. There is melancholy, too, and beautiful melody in No.

mired, even by those who do not like his own music—included in his transcriptions for piano solo of six of Chopin's songs two of those which Niecks sneers at—*My Delights*, and the *Bacchanal*.

11; but the music does not match the grewsomeness of the text—*Two corpses:* one a soldier, dying in the forest amid the croaking of crows and the howling of wolves; the other his sweetheart, dying at the same time in the town to the booming sound of the church-bell. What this song lacks in agony may be found in the last of the set of seventeen, *Poland's Dirge,* perhaps the most funereal song in existence, and at the same time full of fascinating musical detail. The poems for these songs were contributed by several of Chopin's Polish friends.

If Chopin's charming songs are not so widely known even now—half a century after his death—as they deserve to be, this is due in part to the peculiar attitude of the world in regard to specialism. If a man is expert and great in one thing, it is difficult to persuade people that he can be great in some other line too. The world-wide renown of Liszt and Rubinstein as pianists stood in the way of their being accepted as composers. Chopin soon gave up playing in public and became famed as a composer—for the piano alone, however, wherefore his songs were overlooked, though they are stamped with the same traits of genius as his mazurkas, valses, and polonaises.

Like his great predecessors, Ignace Paderewski (born in 1860) is destined to suffer for a time

as a composer, because of his great fame and popularity as a pianist. Yet he has written a number of beautiful and characteristic pieces for piano—as well as for the orchestra, which his countryman, Chopin, neglected. His opera has not been produced at the date of this writing, but he has composed half a dozen songs (opus 18), which I had the pleasure of hearing him play on my piano before they were printed. Though he simply hummed the melody, the songs seemed strangely beautiful to me. It is said that when the famous English tenor, Mr. Lloyd, was asked to sing these new songs in London, he hesitated at first; no doubt from fear that such a pre-eminent specialist at the piano would not know how to write for the voice. But as soon as he had glanced at them he gladly accepted the invitation, and they were much relished by the audience.

The poems which Paderewski selected for these six songs are by Mickiewitz.* In the first of them—*My Tears Were Flowing*—there is less of the Polish atmosphere than in most of his music. In the second, *Wand'ring Along*, there is more of it, especially in the prelude, which is almost as quaint as his delightful *Cracovienne*. No. 3,

* In the edition printed by Edward Schuberth & Co., New York, the English version is by Mrs. Helen D. Tretbar.

My Sweetest Darling, is a setting of the same poem which Chopin used for *My Delights*. There is less eagerness in the osculatory climax of the new setting; but it is a charming love-song nevertheless. In *Over the Waters*, which shows us rocks, clouds, flashes of lightning, mirrored in the water, the composer relies on purely musical means, without attempting word-painting after the manner of Liszt. *Ah! What Tortures* has less the character of personal grief than of that national *zal* peculiar to Poles and embodied in their mazurkas. This melodious and simple song might indeed be called a mazurka for the voice. Mr. Lloyd, at the concert referred to, recognizing its popular character, used it as an encore piece. Another dainty love-song, in the Anacreontic style—*Were I a Ribbon*—concludes this first group of six; which it is to be hoped will be followed by many others.

VI

Scandinavian Song-Writers

AFTER Switzerland, Norway is the favorite playground of European tourists; but while Switzerland has done nothing of importance for music, Norway has produced a number of original composers; including Grieg, Kjerulf, Nordraak, Svendsen, Tellefsen, Selmer, Schjelderup, Sinding, whose works seem to mirror the mountains and fjords, the meadows and forests, of their picturesque country. If we add to these the Swedish Lindblad, Södermann, Emil Sjögren, and the Danish Hartmann, Heise, Horneman, Gade, and Lange-Müller, we have a notable list. It would be interesting to examine the songs of some of these, as there is much to commend in them; but the exigencies of space compel me to confine myself to the king of the Scandinavian composers, Edvard Grieg (born 1843).*

* Unlike some other composers of the first rank, Grieg has a warm sympathy for his younger contemporaries, notably Sinding, Lange-Müller, and Sjögren. To Sinding's songs he attaches

GRIEG

In telling the story of Schubert's life I stated that the charm of his music—his spontaneous melodies and emotional harmonies—cured the operatic tenor Vogl of the tired feeling which is so apt to overcome professional musicians, and gave him a new interest and enthusiasm for his art. In 1843 there was born at Bergen, Norway, another song-writer who has the gift of toning up the most *blasé* musician. A trip through Grieg's music is like a tour of Norway for one who has never seen the scenery peculiar to that country; and it has the same bracing, stimulating effect on the nerves, the brain, and the heart. When I had revelled in the music of Chopin and Wagner, Liszt and Franz, to the point of intoxication, I fancied that the last word had been said in harmony and in melody; when lo! I came across the songs and pianoforte pieces of Grieg, and once more found myself moved to tears of delight.

much importance. "He has been accused," he writes, "of being too Wagnerian, but that, in my opinion, is a shallow judgment. In his songs in particular he is all Sinding. Especially inspired are his settings of Drachmann's poems. Lange-Müller and Sjögren also are extremely poetic and refined song-writers, the first-named suggesting his Danish origin, while the other is more cosmopolitan."

GRIEG.

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Grieg has indeed created the latest, the most modern, atmosphere in music. His harmonies are more bold and daring even than those of the dauntless reformers just named, and they are entirely his own; while his melodic font seems as inexhaustible as Schubert's. Before I became acquainted with the music of Grieg I ranked Franz as second to Schubert among all the song-writers. Now I have my doubts in regard to the second place. When I hear Franz I think he ought to keep it; when I hear Grieg I think it belongs to him.

Grieg has been much more lucky than were Schubert and Franz in winning contemporaneous fame and popularity. His countrymen, instead of decrying him, as the Germans do their men of genius, feel proud of him; and the Norwegian Government has granted him, since 1874, an annual pension of 1,600 crowns; which, with the income from his works, has enabled him to apply all of his strength—of which there is not much, as he has been a sufferer from a pulmonary complaint ever since 1860—to composition. Never, surely, was a more praiseworthy disposition made of public funds. In England his popular acceptance has been hastened by the concerts he has given there with the aid of his wife, Nina Grieg, who has occasionally helped him by her soulful inter-

pretations of his songs, as Clara Schumann helped her husband by playing his piano-forte music. It is likely, too, that Grieg found it easier to strike a sympathetic chord in England, because he is partly of British descent—his great-grandfather, who wrote his name Greig, having been a Scotchman. Grieg's mother, however, was a Norwegian, and from her he inherited his national tendencies, as Chopin did from his Polish mother.

While Grieg has thus won his way to the hearts of cultivated amateurs, the professionals and the public at large hardly realize as yet his exalted rank as a composer. Once more we are confronted with the spectre of Jumbo. "Grieg has written no symphonies, oratorios, or operas; *ergo* he cannot be one of the greatest composers!" As I have already discussed this ridiculous habit of measuring genius with a yardstick (p. 18), I need not dwell on it again. Instead of sneering at Grieg for writing, apart from some chamber-music, only short pieces and songs, we ought to congratulate him and ourselves that he was willing to put his best ideas into these short forms, refusing to follow the bad example of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, Gounod and Bizet, of treating them in Cinderella fashion, keeping all their happy thoughts for longer works. As long as an

artist does write a song, he ought to be asked to give us his best in it; and if he does, he ought to get credit for it. A painter can give us his best quite as well in a canvas a foot wide as in one that covers a whole wall. In fact, artists are apt to esteem a painting more highly in inverse proportion to its size.

Another misconception that has retarded the full appreciation of Grieg is the confusing of the national traits in his music with those that are the product of his individual genius. It is quite true that he is a nationalist. At one time he was in danger of being metamorphosed into a German; but luckily his strong individuality made him rebel against the pedantries of Moscheles and his other teachers at the Leipzig conservatory. He sought refuge in the music of Schumann, Chopin, and Wagner; and finally returned to Norway, where he came under the salutary influence of the Norwegian composer Nordraak, who became his intimate friend and adviser. "It was as though scales fell from my eyes," wrote Grieg. "Through him, for the first time, I became acquainted with the northern folk-song and learned to understand my own nature."

The loving study of the folk-song of his country could not but affect his style and thought.

This folk-music is healthy and robust, often rugged as the bold rocks that overhang the fjords, and it delights in abrupt changes; its rhythms are irregular and capricious, the tonality uncertain and vacillating; and there is a preference for the minor mode and quaint intervals. In all these respects Grieg's music reminds one of the folk-songs of his country; but while his compositions are unmistakably Norwegian, it is important to remember that *there is much more of Grieg in them than of Norway.* The melodies, though redolent of their native soil, are emphatically his own—you do not find such enchanting melodies even among Norwegian folk-songs—and still more unmistakably his own are his bold and fascinating harmonies; for folk-music in its primitive state has no harmonies at all, whereas Grieg's music, as I have already remarked, represents the very latest phase in the evolution of harmony.* His

* It has been noted by some commentators that Grieg, like Liszt and Franz, occasionally makes use of the ecclesiastic modes which preceded our major and minor in the evolution of harmony, and which sound like innovations in modern music. Grieg writes to me, however, that so far as these church modes occur in his compositions—which is not often—they were employed by him almost unconsciously. On the harmonic side of music he has found a special charm, ever since his student days, in chromatic progressions. Bach, Mozart, and Wagner were his teachers in this respect. "Wherever these immortal masters express the

modulations are as unique, as unexpected, as abrupt, yet as natural, as Schubert's; and they have the same power of moving us to tears. As in the case of Chopin, imitators have copied these individual peculiarities of Grieg's genius without any thought of robbing his beehives, but simply under the delusion that they were helping themselves to the common stores of wild honey.

The commentators, also, failed to distinguish between what is national and what is individual in his music, and thus accused him of "speaking a local dialect instead of the world-language of music," when in reality he was simply expressing musical ideas in an original way—his own individual style. He is a "mannerist," not in the sense of being addicted to "uniformity of manner, especially a tasteless uniformity, without freedom or variety;" but in the sense of having "an exceptionally characteristic mode or method." In this latter sense the greatest

deepest feelings," he writes, "I have found that they show a preference for chromatic progressions, each one in his own way. With these as a basis I gradually developed my own conception of the significance of the chromatic element. Many of my songs illustrate my method—for example, *A Swan* (Album III., No. 30), and especially No. 33, *Geschieden*. See also the *Ballade*, op. 24." "The realm of harmony," he declares on another page, "was always my dream-world."

geniuses are the greatest mannerists. We need to hear only a bar or two of Grieg's music to say "That's Grieg!" and the same is true of the music of Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Wagner; but not of the minor men like Pleyel, Lachner, Hummel, Macfarren. A first-class genius is as unmistakable in his music as in his face.*

Turning now to details, can anyone hear that exquisite song, *The First Primrose*, without being moved by a thrill of delight like that which must be felt by a naturalist when he first comes across a bird of paradise, with its gorgeous plumage so different in pattern and coloring from

* It is high time to protest against the injustice which has so long been done Grieg of crediting all that is most charming in his music to the national muse. "How delightfully Norwegian!" amateurs and professionals are apt to exclaim, when they ought to say, "How delightfully Griegian." Nothing could be more absurd than the current notion that Grieg simply gave an artistic setting to national melodies, as Liszt and Brahms did in their Hungarian rhapsodies. Among his seventy works there are, besides two volumes of piano-forte arrangements of popular songs, only three (notably op. 30, 35, and 64) in which he has incorporated Norwegian melodies; all the others are his own. *Solvejg's Lied* is obviously a conscious imitation of the national music, but it stands almost alone in this respect. On the whole there is probably more of the Norwegian coloring in Grieg's piano-forte music than in his songs; but the more we study Norwegian folk-song and the Northern composers before Grieg, the more we are astounded at his originality.

that of all other birds? When I first heard it, I was affected as I was when I saw my first Mariposa Lily in California. The lily seemed too beautiful for reality, and the song seemed like the celestial music we sometimes hear in our dreams. A more glorious, original, yet simple song was never written. It has the tenderness of the primrose, the freshness of spring, the buoyancy of youth. It is a song the mere thought of which sometimes brings tears to my eyes, and it is one of many in the Grieg collection that have that effect. It is printed in the third volume of the Peters edition, with which I advise everyone unfamiliar with Grieg's genius to begin. In my copy of this volume every one of the twelve songs has a star, while the primrose song and two others—*A Swan* and *The Minstrel's Song*—I have marked with two stars. *A Swan*, perhaps even more than *The First Primrose*, is Grieg in every bar. Sing it over a few times, and if it does not give you the Grieg fever, which will make you try all of his hundred and twenty songs, and then eagerly look to Bergen for more—you have not a musical soul. What a superb climax, what a world of feeling in the two bars when this swan, silent all its life, sings at last! The art with which Grieg has embodied in his music the deeper meaning of Ibsen's poem, is marvel-

lous.* No less remarkable is the realism with which the romance of the love-incantation and regret in Ibsen's *The Minstrel's Song* is mirrored in Grieg's music; this, too, has a stirring climax at the end. This same volume also contains the popular *Solvejg's Lied.* It is a beautiful song, but not one of the very best.

The fourth volume of the Peters edition (the official and best edition, with English versions by F. Corder) is even a more remarkable treasury of song than the third. Eight of the twelve songs in it I have marked with two stars—*The Youth, Springtide, The Wounded Heart, By the Riverside, A Fair Vision, The Old Mother, On the Way Home, Friendship.* They embrace a wide range of emotional expression, and the music of all is enchanting. What melodic breadth,

* Within a few years *A Swan* has become one of the most popular of his songs. It was sung at a Colonne concert in Paris, about ten years ago, by the Belgian vocalist Grimaud, with orchestral accompaniment under the direction of the composer, who was delighted with the big dramatic accents with which he brought out the tragic import of the poem and the music. He would have been as deeply impressed could he have heard it as interpreted in New York by Mme. Nordica, who sings it with the emotional power which her perfect mastery of Wagnerian song has taught her. It is one of the most popular songs in her repertory. Grieg wishes to call attention to the fact that the words "*Ja da—da sangst du*" (At last thou sangest) are to be sung "*sempre ff.* if possible even with a *crescendo,* and by no means *diminuendo* and *piano.*"

what exquisite tenderness, what superbly swelling harmonies and entrancing modulations in *Springtide! By the Riverside* is one of the best songs to study the peculiar melodic intervals and harmonies of Grieg. Every bar seems to have the five letters of his name stamped on it, and the charm of this original musical physiognomy grows on you like the expression of a face that indicates character as well as beauty. The same may be said of *The Old Mother*, which is one of the most quaintly and originally melodious of all the songs, and well illustrates Grieg's way of dropping from one key into another and from minor to major, like Schubert, yet quite unlike him too.

The Youth is one of those songs which indicate that despair in the Far North where the sun does not rise for months every year, must be a more hopeless feeling than elsewhere. A German might write such a song, but not an Italian or a Frenchman. But even a German could hardly realize the depth of despair and the agony expressed in the song which is named *Friendship*, but should be called *False Friendship*. "False all friends are," the poet concludes, because one has stolen away another's chosen spouse. The strange, weird harmonies give the effect of an intensified minor. Among Grieg's songs this one occupies the same place

as the *Doppelgänger* does among Schubert's. It is one of my favorites. Poignant grief has never been expressed more bitterly. Were it not in three-four time it might be used as a heart-rending funeral march.*

No composer seems to have been able to write more than one piece of this kind. Grieg, however, has a counterpart of that dolorous song in his *At the Bier of a Young Woman.* The exquisite beauty and tenderness of the music to the words (beginning a bar ahead) "Oh, that death should

* Album IV. (my references are always to the Peters edition) contains undoubtedly the best collection of Grieg's songs. Here we breathe the air of his native country. In these songs, which differ from all the preceding ones, he struck a tone of Norwegian *Volksthümlichkeit* which was new at the time. "I was all aflame with enthusiasm," he writes, "when I became acquainted in the spring of 1880 with the poems of Vinje, which embody a deep philosophy of life, and in course of eight to ten days I composed not only the songs contained in the fourth volume, but others by the same poet which are not yet in print. A. O. Vinje was a peasant by birth. He attempted with his prose works to enlighten the Norwegian people, and these writings, together with his poems, gave him a great national importance." Of the songs referred to, Nos. 38 and 39—*Spring* and *The Wounded*—have been published also in an arrangement for string orchestra with the title *Zwei Elegische Melodien.* In this version they have gained great vogue outside of his country. The profound melancholy of the poems explains the solemn strains of the music, but as there are no verses to go with the orchestral version of these pieces, he deemed it advisable to elucidate them by giving them the more significant titles of *Last Spring* and *Heart-wounds.*

stray on the flowery way, break a blossom so fair!" would alone place Grieg in the first rank of song-writers. And there is still another, *The Mother Sings* (in opus 60)—a mother bewailing her child in the grave—in which the grief is expressed in overwhelmingly agonizing harmonies.

What Schumann said of Franz (that, were one to dwell on all the interesting details, one would never come to an end) must be applied to Grieg too. I have spoken of only two or three of the albums or collections, and there are sixteen of them.* They are not all of equal value, though each contains good numbers. Volume v., in which *At the Bier of a Young Woman* is incorporated, includes also another of the very best songs, one that I would not part with for all the *Lieder* Brahms wrote—yet I am obliged to listen to Brahms songs at every concert while I have never heard *From Monte Pincio* sung in public. It is difficult even for a hardened critic to write about such a song without "gushing" like a school-girl. Play the opening chords and ask yourself if Schubert himself could have conjured up the atmosphere and

* All short and cheap, by the way. It was wise in Grieg to incorporate all his works in the Peters edition, thus making it possible for even poor students and music-lovers to buy them.

mood of sunset more exquisitely and concisely than Grieg has done here in four bars. Note at the end of the page how the face of the music assumes a sombre expression at the comparison of the mountain in the pale light to "the face of the dead." Here Grieg is a word-painter in music as literal as Liszt; and again on the second page following, where "mountain horns sound above," an entrancing strain which occurs again at the end of the song, *morendo*—like an echo dying away. The gay melody (*vivo*) which repeatedly interrupts the other themes, and the melodic strain first heard to the words "bounds sweetly near us"—all this is indescribably beautiful; but it must be played with consummate expression. Grieg has noted the expression marks minutely; but a genuine musician does not need them, for this music, like all the supreme products of genius, tells its own emotional story to capable interpreters.

It is impossible in the limited space at my command to more than mention a few more of my favorites. *I Love Thee*, composed in 1864, when German influences still prevailed, sounds as if Grieg had undertaken to write a Schumann song, and succeeding in equalling him at his best. This *Lied* in the German manner is set to a Scandinavian poem (Andersen). Among

the six songs of opus 48, on the other hand, there are two to poems by the Germans, Geibel and Uhland, in which the music reveals Grieg's individuality in every bar. The first is a pensive love-song, the second is like a merry folk-dance. These are two-star songs.* The one-star songs are too numerous to mention. Besides these there are some that seem mediocre in comparison, though most other writers might feel proud of them. Very few are really commonplace, for Grieg abhors the commonplace as Chopin did. Harmonic progressions wear off like the impressions on coins; but Grieg's harmonies are ever new, like coins fresh from the mint—and most of them gold. The last set of his songs, quite recently issued as opus 67, contains at least four gold coins of a high denomination—*The Mountain Maid*, *The Tryst*, *Love*, and *An Evil Day*. The picture on these coins is unmistakably Grieg in every case.

For the autumn of 1900 Grieg has ready a

* One of Grieg's best songs is the Prologue of *Aus Fjeld und Fjord*, opus 44. In 1886 he received a visit from the poet Drachmann and the two made an excursion to the Norwegian mountains. One day they became acquainted with some charming women who at once inspired poet and composer to utter their sentiments in a joint song. The epilogue the composer intends to alter in a future edition, omitting the *banale* strain *Auf der Alm da giebts Ka Sünd*, which he had used because the poet had sung it as he had heard it in the Tyrol.

further collection of songs which, as he informs me, are of a cosmopolitan character. The underlying poems are by the Danish Otto Benzon. Among the earlier songs we find the names of two other Danish poets who inspired some of Grieg's best *Lieder*, and with whom he was personally acquainted—Hans Christian Andersen and Drachmann. During the Leipzig period (1858–1862) German poems were utilized, and on his return to his native country the Norwegian Björnsen, Ibsen, Vinje, Rolfsen, Paulsen, Munch, and others inflamed his fancy. Björnsen and Ibsen reflect in their works the influence of the national legendary lore, with its melancholy and its power of "saying much in a few words;" and these same traits are reflected in Grieg's music, which is always concise and pregnant with meaning. "The fundamental trait of Norwegian folk-song, as contrasted with the German is," in the words of Grieg, "a deep melancholy, which may suddenly change to a wild unrestrained gayety. Mysterious gloom and indomitable wildness—these are the contrasts of Norwegian folk-song"—and, he might have added, of much of his own music.

Like all the great song-writers, Grieg is an enthusiastic admirer of good poetry, and he has too much respect for what he admires to make

of it a mere scaffolding for his music. When he composes, his prime object seems not so much to write music as to do justice to the poet's subtlest intentions. To make the poem stand out prominently, to emphasize its meaning—that is evidently his object. To appreciate the conscientiousness with which he has carried out this principle, one must be able to sing his songs in the language of the poems. Translations, however good, can never quite take the place of the originals. A good translator must not only have a thorough command of language, but must be an expert musician—a combination rarely found. As translations go, those of Grieg's songs are by no means among the worst; but of course they cannot give one a correct idea of Grieg's declamation—the coincidence of his melodic accents with the poetic accents, which is as conscientious as in Wagner's music-dramas.

Grieg is an ardent admirer of Wagner, while he dislikes the intriguing Wagnerites and the imitators who try to say, in their own way, what Wagner said a thousand times better before them. There are no echoes of Wagner's ideas in his songs; but he frankly admits that in the songs of his second period, and still more in those of the third, he endeavored to learn from Wagner how to perfect his declamation. In

some cases, as for example in the prologue of opus 44, he almost adopted the recitative style. But on the whole he feels no inclination to follow in the path of the modern German song-writers. He does not care to have the melodic element transferred mainly to the piano, and does not sympathize with the endeavors to engraft Wagner's operatic style on the *Lied*. "The lyrical *Dramatik* of the *Lied*," he writes, "must, in my view, always be entirely different from that of the music-drama."

Some of Grieg's songs, like some of Franz's, seem too *intime* to be sung in a hall before a mixed public. It all depends, however, on the interpreting artists. A few years ago, Grieg tells me, he was dismayed to find his *Cradle-song* (Album, vol. i., No. 7) in a Leipzig Gewandhaus programme. This song seemed to him absolutely impossible in the concert-hall. But—the vocalist was Johann Messchaert, and Arthur Nikisch sat at the piano. After a few lines had been sung, a great silence prevailed in the hall. The composer's hopes began to rise, because the performance was so incomparably beautiful. And when the last bar had been sung, the audience expressed its satisfaction in an outburst of prolonged applause. Courage and talent combined had won a signal triumph.

If the state of Grieg's health had permitted,

many such triumphs might have been won in the concert-halls of Europe and America by himself and his wife, and the world would have become familiar sooner with some of his most fascinating *Lieder*. As it was, only a few song-recitals were given by the two, in Christiania, Copenhagen, Leipzig, Rome, Paris, and London; but those who were privileged to hear these, described them as unique, artistic events. That the composer should reveal the poetic details of the piano parts as no else could, was to be expected; but everyone was surprised that a singer who had not been heralded as one of the shining lights of the stage, nevertheless outshone most of those lights, especially in the intelligence and sympathy with which she entered into the intentions of the composer, while giving the poem its due as well as the music. Frau von Holstein, wife of the composer Franz von Holstein, and a personal friend of Mendelssohn and Schumann, once declared that Mme. Grieg's singing reminded her of Jenny Lind's in its captivating abandon, dramatic vivacity, soulful treatment of the poem, and unaffected manner, unlike that of the typical prima donna. Edmund Neupert sent her one volume of his études with the inscription, "To Mme. Nina Grieg, whose song is more beautiful and warmer than that of all others." Ibsen, after hearing her in-

terpret his poems as set to music by Grieg, whispered, shaking the hands of both, the one word: "Understood." Tchaikovsky heard her sing *Springtide* (Album, vol. iii., No. 38) in Leipzig, and tears came to his eyes. Subsequently he sent her his own songs, with a cordial dedication.

Mme. Grieg made her last public appearance in London, about two years ago, when she also sang for Queen Victoria at Windsor. Now she only sings for her husband and his friends. He regrets deeply that so few had the opportunity to hear her when her voice was in its prime. At that time he hardly realized her superiority to the average professional singer. It seemed to him a matter of course that one should sing so beautifully, so eloquently, so soulfully as she did. Yet her talent was not wasted. It inspired Grieg to renewed efforts. His best songs were written for her; they embody his personal feelings, and he confesses that he could no more have stopped expressing them in songs than he could have stopped breathing. It is an interesting case, showing how conjugal affection may be an inspirer of the arts, quite as well as the romantic love which precedes marriage. In the songs of the second period (beginning, say, with the Album, vol. iii.) experts will notice a greater longing for depth and inclination toward

reverie. His wife's interpretations gained correspondingly in soulfulness. The third, or present, period appears almost like a combination of the two preceding ones, but enriched by new experiences.

VII

Italian and French Song-Writers

ITALY, commonly supposed to have been the cradle of song and the natural conservatory of singers, has contributed nothing of importance to the treasures of the *Lied* or lyric art-song. This may seem strange at first sight, yet it is easily explained with reference to national peculiarities of taste. The Italians, of course, have always had their folk-songs of all varieties; and some species were intermediate between folk-music and art-music. There is no trustworthy collection of old Italian folk-songs, however; and there is reason to suspect that many which are supposed to be such are really operatic melodies that have passed from the stage to the people. These tunes satisfied the populace, while the educated lovers of music were interested only in the elaborate operatic arias and despised the simple short songs; wherefore, there was no temptation for the composers to write them, or, if they did write any, to put their happiest thoughts into them.

In these respects the conditions were similar to those which, as we have seen, prevailed in Germany, and which prevented the composers, up to Schubert, from writing great *Lieder*. In Italy, however, there were additional reasons for the absence of good art-songs. The Italians have at all times shown an extreme partiality for melody, at the expense of everything else. If the "words" given to the composers to set to music did not fit their tunes, so much the worse for the words; and they were apt to be buried anyway amid the rank profusion of vocal embroideries. The harmony, too, was a mere "side show," and was kept as simple and conventional as possible. Now, since harmonic elaboration and the close union, in accent and sentiment, of the music with the words are the very essence of the *Lied*, it is obvious why Italian musicians have done so little for it.

Apart from the considerations here advanced there was no reason why such composers as Rossini, Donizetti, and Verdi should not have written good *Lieder* and plenty of them. They had the requisite genius, not only melodic but harmonic, to do it; and Verdi, in particular, has in his last operas shown as great a respect for the texts underlying his music as Wagner ever did. In our time two of the younger operatic composers, Mascagni and Leoncavallo,

have written sets of songs; but they are painfully empty, and were probably done chiefly with an eye to their German admirers—just as the songs of such men as Tosti, Arditi, Denza, Mattei, and Mariani are written chiefly for English and American singers. These are drawing-room ditties, rather than *Lieder*. A man who might have written real *Lieder* is Liszt's friend, Sgambati, but he lacks the creative faculty. I have seldom heard a *Lied* by an Italian that I would care to hear again.

Passing on to France we get into a different atmosphere. Whereas the melody-intoxicated Italian pays little more attention to the words of a song than if the human voice were a flute, the Frenchman is as much interested in the poem as in the music, if not more so. The conditions are therefore more favorable here for a genuine *Lied*. Yet we must not look for real *Lieder* in France. We found them, to be sure, in Russia, Scandinavia, and Hungary; but the writers of them had all been to school in Germany, and Liszt had a German mother. The French have countless *chansons* and *romances*, but they lack the depth of the German *Lied* both in the poem and the music; as Liszt has remarked, there is no *Sehnsuch*, no *Gemüth*, in them—none of the soulfulness, the senti-

mental yearning and romanticism, which are essential to the *Lied.* Nor can it be said that French composers have taken the lyric song so seriously as the Germans have since Schubert's day. France has produced no great song-specialists like Schubert, Franz, and Jensen; and while most of her great opera composers of the nineteenth century, and even before, wrote pretty romances too, they seldom deigned to put their best ideas into them.

When a Frenchman writes an opera, or a book, he usually has something interesting to say. But in going over hundreds of French songs by famous writers, for the purpose of forming an opinion at first hand, I have been struck painfully by the rarity of good ones. Many are dainty, pretty, rhythmically piquant; but few are deep, or harmonically original and moving; while the majority consist of empty verbiage, musically speaking.

Take those of Berlioz, for instance. Wagner declared that Berlioz had taught the world how one can, by the clever use of orchestral colors, hide the lack of ideas. This is quite true, and it is in the songs of Berlioz where the orchestra usually does not lend its aid, that the weakness of his inventive faculty is made most obvious. In the beautifully printed collection entitled "33 *melodies pour chant et piano à une ou plusieurs*

voix et choeur," there is not one that I should call an interesting song; though there are pleasing details in some of them, and the technique is ingenious. As a song-writer Berlioz is a French Brahms.*

It was not Berlioz's fault that new ideas so seldom came to him, though we may chide him for not reserving any of those he had for his *romances*. What is more surprising is that a composer like Bizet, who lavished such a profusion of enchanting new ideas on his opera *Carmen* and his *L'Arlesienne* music, should have acted so niggardly toward his lyrics. The Spanish serenade (*Ouvre ton cœur*) alone seems quite worthy of the composer of *Carmen;* it has the same quaint spirit, the same piquant melody, and delightfully exotic accompaniment; also, what we so rarely find in a French song, a melodious bass and imitative passages in the accompaniment. Two other good songs are the *Rêve de la bien-aimée* with dreamy music, and *J'aime toujours*. In general, Bizet's melody is fresher, his harmonies much more interesting,

* As the above title of the Richault edition of thirty-three songs by Berlioz indicates, some of them are for two or more voices, in some cases with chorus. The complete edition of Berlioz's works, now being printed by Breitkopf and Härtel, will include five songs for two or three voices, eleven with chorus, and twenty-six for one voice with piano-forte.

than those of most of the French masters; but how he could have ever written such school-girl harmonies as the opening bars of *Le Gascon*, passes my comprehension.

Gounod wrote a considerable number of songs, both in France and especially during his sojourn in England, where, according to A. Hervey, the *Maid of Athens*, *The Fountain mingles with the River*, *Oh! that we two were maying*, *The Worker*, and *There is a green hill far away*, have become specially popular. Gounod is another man of undoubted genius who makes one wonder that the same pen which wrote the inspired music of an opera like *Faust*, should have been capable of perpetrating such *banalités* as make up the substance of most of his songs; in which the piano parts seldom rise above the level of guitar accompaniments, and the introductory bars, instead of foreshadowing the poetry, serve only as a means of giving the singer his pitch. Most of his songs are mere drawing-room music. Piquant details one finds here and there, but no pregnant ideas. The *Serenade* seems to me the best of these songs. *The Valley* and *Aubade* also have merit. The *Ave Maria* has been much abused, and it was, of course, a bit of vandalism to take Bach's delightful prelude and utterly mar its character by adding to it a melody which requires the prel-

ude to be taken, as Franz said, at least three times as slowly as it ought to be. At the same time the combination makes an undeniably interesting song which thousands have enjoyed who would otherwise never have heard of Bach.

Of the songs of Saint-Saëns only two have interested me—*La feuille de peuplier* and *Plainte*. Saint-Saëns is as thorough a musician as any that Germany has produced; even Wagner and Liszt were astounded at his feats in playing the MS. score of an opera like *Siegfried* at sight. His songs betray his mastery of technique, but he begrudged them ideas like those which charm us in his orchestral works; hence he claims only passing mention in a book on the *Lied*.

In the songs of Delibes there is nothing quite equal to the best things in his operas and ballads; but he betrays German influences more plainly perhaps than any other French song-writer, and there is much charm in some of his lyrics, notably in *Arioso*, *The Nightingale*, *Regrets*, *Good-Day*, *Suzanne*, and the *Bird-Catcher*.

More than a hundred songs were written by Godard, and among them an unusual proportion of good ones. *Florian's Song* is charming—better than any song of Gounod or Bizet. Next

in merit of those in Schirmer's album is *A Flower in Exile*. The *Arabian Song* is as quaintly exotic as Rubinstein's Persian *Lieder*. Other good ones are *Sweet Lassie*, *Love*, *Song of the Shepherd*, *Farewell*, *Naught Else*, and *The Traveller*, a splendidly dramatic ballad.

Massenet's songs are among the best produced in France. *Adieu*, for instance, has a spontaneous melodic flow, and the harmonies are not so bald as in so many French songs—including some of his own. *Sleep*, *friend*, *To the dead one*, and *October roses* may be mentioned as among the good ones. But the gem of them is the deservedly famous *Elégie*, in which the melody is not only attractive but emotional, while the accompaniment is made interesting by imitative touches.

Among the best-known writers of French songs are two women, Augusta Holmès and Cécile Chaminade. Augusta Holmès (who was born in Paris, of Irish parents) has written more than a hundred songs. I have not been able to find any evidence of inspiration in them. The same must be said of the large number of songs written by Mlle. Chaminade. I have seen a newspaper paragraph to the effect that "statistics of the music-trade inform us that more of her works are sold to-day than of any other composer for the salon," and I have read

that she has written "melodies surprisingly fresh, harmonies startling in originality." The person who wrote this must have been startlingly unfamiliar with the better kind of song-literature. If Mlle. Chaminade had written "harmonies startling in originality" she would not be the most popular "salon" composer, but would be neglected by the masses, like Schubert, Franz, and Grieg. She owes her popularity to the fact that she writes down to the level of those who prefer skim-milk to cream, because it is easier to digest. When her harmonies do deviate from the beaten paths they are apt to be clumsy and amateurish. Nor are her melodies fresh and original. She usually maunders along in a platitudinous way that makes me wildly impatient. Many of her songs are effective for the singers, who therefore favor them; but I have not found one to which I would attach a star as a badge of excellence, unless it be the *Serenade Sevillane*. Mlle. Chaminade's face is said to have "a boyish look," and there is no specific feminine tenderness in her songs—a trait which she shares with other female composers, who seem to lack both true femininity and the virile faculty of creating ideas. For the combination of these traits we must go to men—to Schubert, Franz, Grieg, Chopin, MacDowell. Strange how much more

original and fascinating women are in literature than in music!*

* I refer, of course, only to the creative side of the art. As interpreters, especially in vocal music, women are quite the equals of men, and first-class sopranos are much more abundant than tenors of the same rank. As listeners, too, and patrons of music, women are far ahead of men. A glance at any concert-hall—in America, at any rate—shows that if it were not for the women there would be no concerts.

VIII

English and American Song-Writers

AS late as 1875 the eminent musical critic of the London *Times*, Dr. F. Hueffer, lamented the "almost total absence of what might be called artistic song" in England. The cause of this seemed to him to lie partly in the prevailing extent to which English popular poetry took the narrative form of the ballad, partly in the atmosphere of the music-hall, and partly in the overpowering influence of Mendelssohn and his imitators. No doubt each of these suggestions contains a part of the truth; yet the main reason why there are no English songs is that England has produced no composers of the first rank. Apart from the operas of Purcell and the oratorios of Handel, the operettas of Arthur Sullivan are the only productions of England that can be put in line with the best work of their kind done on the continent. Sullivan has written songs too—more than seventy—but the real *Lied* was as much beyond him as grand opera, and his pro-

ductions are mere drawing-room songs, which accounts for their great popularity. Had England produced a man like Grieg, he would have been strong enough to overcome the adverse influences noted by Hueffer, and he would have found plenty of suitable English lyrics to stimulate his genius.

Since Hueffer wrote his plaint there has been some improvement as regards the art-song. A number of talented and thoroughly trained musicians have endeavored to shake off the Mendelssohn yoke and to breathe a more bracing atmosphere than that of the music-hall: the result being a series of songs that deserve the attention of others than the English; while to the English they appeal with special force because they do not have to be sung to awkward and ludicrous translations of foreign verse, but are set to popular English poetry. Among the composers to be named here are Goring Thomas, Stanford, Hubert Parry, Cowen, and Mackenzie.

The early death of Goring Thomas is to be greatly deplored, as he had written some charming songs, among them *Hope*, *Spring is not Dead*, *The First Rose*, *Serenade*, *Winds in the Trees*, the exquisite *Chanson d'Avril*, and, best of all, *A Summer Night*—a first-class song in every respect, with novel ideas, plenty of melody, a

varied accompaniment and a passionate climax. Villiers Stanford, who has made a valuable collection of fifty Irish melodies and whose *Shamus O'Brien*, imbued with the genuine spirit of Irish folk-music, is the most delightful opera ever written on the British isles—has also composed a number of excellent *Lieder*, of which *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* is the best known. Among Cowen's songs there would be more good ones had he written fewer. Hubert Parry's songs are musicianly always, and some of them betray the influence of Brahms; while his treatment of the piano-forte part is in the best German manner. Mackenzie also sounds the Brahms note, especially in *O Roaming Wind*. Better songs are *Spring is not Dead*, *The First Rose*, and especially *Hope*, which is admirable. There are many other English song-writers from Sterndale Bennet to Amherst Webber and Coleridge-Taylor who might be considered; but, so far as my experience goes, their productions have not done anything to create a national or individual school of song.

The American composer is coming rapidly to the front. It is not likely that if the centennial celebration of our independence had occurred a quarter of a century later, it would have been deemed necessary to go abroad, even to a Richard Wagner, for a festival march. It

is related that when Mme. Essipoff wanted, in 1876, to make up a programme of American compositions, she experienced difficulty in finding the requisite number of pieces coming up to the required standard. She would have no trouble now. Arthur P. Schmidt, of Boston, has issued a "Portrait Catalogue of American Compositions"—a pamphlet of fifty-two pages made up entirely of the list of pieces by one hundred and eighteen different composers, seven of them being women—Mmes. Beach, Hood, Lang, Lavallee, Rogers, Spencer, and Wood. But this list is far from being exhaustive. Many American composers have works printed by Ditson, Schuberth, Schirmer, and other publishers, while the John Church Company, of Cincinnati, has issued a book called *Laurel Winners*, which contains biographic sketches of thirty composers who are represented on their list. With the limited space at my command it is obviously impossible for me to consider the works of all these men and women, and we must content ourselves with a bird's-eye view of the situation.*

* A book by Rupert Hughes, specially devoted to American composers, will appear about the same time as this volume. Having seen the proof-sheets, I can commend it as an admirable and much-needed work. Mr. Hughes went so far in his conscientious efforts to arrive at just estimates as to examine even manuscripts. He is

The first American composer whose works evince a musical scholarship worthy of the great Germans, while being at the same time imbued with creative fancy and individuality, is Professor John K. Paine, of Harvard. His best work must be sought in his compositions for orchestra, which display a thorough mastery of his art and combine classical outline with the romantic spirit. Toward the song he has obviously felt no strong penchant, for he has written only six *Lieder*. These, however, deserve to be better known; especially *Moonlight*, which is a charming song, and the *Matin Song*. There are dainty touches in *A Bird upon a Rosy Bough*, while *Early Spring Time* has a peaceful, almost religious character, suggesting the composer's sacred works. Professor Paine has also exerted a wide and salutary influence on music in America through his pupils.

Prominent among these is Arthur Foote, one of the leaders of the Boston school of composers. He has written—among other things—about forty songs, the most successful of which have been *Irish Folk-Song*, *I'm Wearing awa'*, *On the Way to Kew*, *In Picardie*, *Love me, if I Live*,

in some cases more liberal with praise than I feel inclined to be; but I admit that, in the case of living composers, who get so little recognition for their labors, such a disposition is more than pardonable.

Elaine's Song, *The Eden Rose*. Those which Mr. Foote himself likes best—and my judgment coincides with his—are *On the Way to Kew*, *In Picardie*, *My True Love hath My Heart*, *Roumanian Song*, and four German songs to poems from Baumbach's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*. Mr. Foote thinks—and here I again agree with him—that the popularity of songs depends very largely on their being taken up by concert-singers. He informs me that the two of his songs which have had the widest sale—*Irish Folk-Song* and *I'm Wearing awa'*—were both written in less time and more easily than almost any others. Mr. Foote is a great admirer of Franz, and some of his lyrics betray the salutary influence of that master, though not so strongly as Otto Dresel's do. In his poetic selections he has wisely shown a strong predilection for the old English writers.

Another pupil of Professor Paine and a prominent song-composer of the Boston school is Clayton Johns. In his songs, too—of which there are about a hundred—I have noted here and there a touch of Franz—as in *Ask whence comes Sadness*. His *Winter Journey* seems like a dainty Russian folk-song, simple and plaintive. A good song is *Were I a Prince Egyptian*. The general level of Mr. Johns's songs is quite high, and he probably owes his popularity partly to

the fact that he knows how to write accompaniments that are simple without being bald.

G. W. Chadwick, who, since 1897, has been director of the New England Conservatory of Music, has written about seventy-five songs, among which are some of the most original produced in America. In answer to some questions I asked, he wrote: "I cannot say that I have any particular favorites, for the ones I used to like best I have heard so much that I get very tired of them; especially when they are done backwards, as they often are. The ones which seem to be sung the most are *Allah*, *Before the Dawn*, *Oh! Let Night Speak of Me*, *The Sweet Wind that Blows*, *Du bist wie eine Blume*, *Bedouin Love Song*. I think that personally I like my little folk-song *Love and Joy*, sixteen measures long, as well as any. I do not know whether you would include such an ambitious thing as my ballad *Lochinvar*, for baritone and orchestra, but I have some reason to think that it is as characteristic as any of my works."

Allah is deservedly the most popular of Chadwick's songs. It is not only a good song, but a great one, which should be in every singer's repertory. It may have seemed presumptuous on Chadwick's part to set to music *Thou Art Just Like a Flower*, after so many eminent foreign masters had done it; but his music is as

charming as any that that much-composed song has called forth. Among the others which I like particularly are *Nocturne*, *Song from the Persian*, *Sorais' Song*, *Request*, *Bedouin Love Song*, *Green Grows the Willow*, *He Loves Me*.

The most popular of American composers and song-writers is Reginald De Koven. Of his fifteen operettas, several have been remarkably successful, *Robin Hood* alone having been sung about 3,000 times in ten years. He has written about one hundred and thirty-five songs, of none of which fewer than 5,000 copies have been sold; while of *Oh! Promise Me* more than 1,000,000 are in circulation. Such remarkable success, of course, could not have been won had not De Koven been willing to write songs in the operetta and drawing-room styles; but it would be unjust to brush him aside with that remark, as envious detractors would like to do. His memory, no doubt, is obvious in some of his pieces, as it is in that of most composers; but he has a vein of his own which yields an abundant supply of fresh melody, and he knows, too, how to render an accompaniment piquant and attractive. Next to *Oh! Promise Me*, the best known of his songs are *A Winter Lullaby*, *Indian Love Song*, *For this*, *I Promise Thee*, *A Recessional*, *My Love Will Come To-day*, *Past and Future*. "Generally

speaking," Mr. De Koven writes to me, "my own favorite songs have been those that sold the least."

Ethelbert Nevin is another composer of the New York group whose songs have won a wide popularity. Rupert Hughes calls him "a fervent worker in diamonds," and it is certainly true that he is careful as to details, his harmonies being seldom commonplace, and often rich and agreeable. His songs are very singable, too, but his melodic vein lacks variety; so that the singing of a number of his songs in succession creates a sense of monotony. Among the best of his productions are *Autumn Sadness*, *'Twas April*, *Recall Our Love*, *Airly Beacon*, and *Dites Moi*, which sounds particularly American.

Among the composers residing in New York there are, too, Henry Holden Huss and Edgar Stillman Kelley, whose songs are not so widely known as they deserve to be, partly because so few of them are in print; though both of them have written others which, it is to be hoped, will soon be published. These songs are better than many that are known to all. Singers are singularly slow in finding out what is good or they would ere this have put on their repertories Huss's *They that Sow in Tears*, *Spring*, *Just Like a Lovely Flower* (still another fine setting of the favorite Heine poem), *The Jess'mine*

Bush, for they are not only good music, but, at the same time, very effective for concert-hall and parlor performance—which cannot be said of all songs of their grade of excellence. As for Kelley, he first became widely known through his *The Lady Picking Mulberries*, which is written in the pentatonic scale and has won the approbation of Chinese experts, as well as Occidentals. He lived some years in San Francisco, where he had excellent opportunities for studying Chinese music. But this is merely a bit of local color. Apart from it, Kelley has a remarkably original vein of thought and expression. Of his songs, those most sung are the six included in his opus 6 and entitled *Phases of Love*. But his best songs are his settings of Poe's *Eldorado* and *Israfel*, opus 8, dedicated to Robert Franz, who wrote the composer an appreciative letter.

Many good songs—and thousands of mediocre and trashy ones—have been written by other American composers—more than a hundred of them; but I can do no more here than merely give the names of a few whose songs have attracted more or less attention—H. W. Loomis, Horatio Parker, Van der Stucken, Gilchrist, Hadley, Gerrit Smith, Homer N. Bartlett, Rubin Goldmark, C. B. Hawley, H. Millard, Victor Harris, Whitney Coombs, Homer A.

Norris, G. W. Marston, Victor Herbert (who, though born in Ireland and educated in Germany, has become thoroughly Americanized and now writes the best and most popular of operettas), Bruno Oscar Klein, Sebastian Schlesinger, Walter Damrosch (these three born in Germany), George Osgood, Isidore Luckstone, and Edward J. Finck.*

MACDOWELL

Were I asked to name the two greatest living song-writers I should say Edvard Grieg and Edward MacDowell. There is a certain affinity between these two composers, traceable, no doubt, to their Scotch ancestry. Grieg and Wagner are the only composers whose influence can be distinctly traced here and there in MacDowell's songs; but it is no more than a harmonic atmosphere which he breathes in common with them when he gets into certain emotional spheres. His ideas are always his own and there are plenty of them. One thing that Mac-

* When I was a student at Harvard I used to play 'cello and piano duets with one of Longfellow's daughters. One day I played my brother's *Curfew Bells* ("Solemnly, mournfully"), and the poet, who occasionally came in to listen to our music, remarked that he liked it better than any other setting of his poems he had heard. It was published by Ditson.

MacDOWELL.

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Dowell has in common with Grieg and Wagner is what one of his pupils has aptly called an impression of "outdoorness." As James Huneker has remarked, "MacDowell is fond of the open air. For him always the heather and the wind that sweeps across it, the crags of the highlands and the bonny blue of the sky." The sultry atmosphere of the hot-house never breathes from his music, but always the bracing air of the shady forest with its fairy life, or the sunlit field with the birds above. It is music that is full of ozone and originality. MacDowell is undoubtedly a genius—"not," as Philip Hale once wittily remarked, "a Boston genius, but a real genius."

Thinkers are rare in all departments of mental activity, and thinkers in tones rarest of all; but MacDowell is a thinker; you can see it in the portrait included in this volume, as well as you can hear it in his music; and with the faculty of meditation he unites the still rarer gift of originating ideas. Rossini was once asked what were the main requisites for a great singer. "First, voice," he replied; "secondly, voice; thirdly, voice." From his florid point of view he was right. But there is a higher point of view, particularly for composers. If I were asked what are the three first requisites of a great composer, I should answer, "First, ideas;

secondly, ideas; thirdly, ideas." Form and polish, to be sure, are important, too; but those can be taught to any conservatory pupil, whereas ideas come from heaven and cannot be created except by a brain born to create them. MacDowell has such a brain, and that is why he is a genius; not a mere imitator and echo, like most of his colleagues. At the same time his music is always moulded and polished with infinite care; and he has the same horror of the commonplace that Chopin, Wagner, and Grieg have manifested. A regiment of soldiers could not make him write a stale melody or a platitudinous succession of chords, such as constitute the stock in trade of most song-writers. One of the greatest charms of his music is that where you expect a certain chord as almost inevitable, he surprises you with quite another one. He has the faculty, peculiar to the highest order of genius, of evoking tears in the listener with a single chord or modulation. He never writes unless he has something new and interesting to say, and when he has said it he stops. A slow and hard worker himself, he wonders at the fertility of some of his colleagues who seem to shake compositions from their sleeves. But if these colleagues followed his example of writing only when they had something new to say, they would never write at all.

It would be difficult to decide which are the most beautiful and important of MacDowell's compositions, his thirty-nine songs, his much more numerous piano-forte pieces, or his works for the orchestra in which he shows, on a large scale, the same exquisite color-sense that so charms us in his piano-forte parts and pieces. Here we are concerned with his songs along. The first of his compositions which he has considered worthy of perpetuation in print are the *Two Old Songs* marked as opus 9. The first of these, though a setting of Burns's "Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon," has rather the German than the Scotch atmosphere, and the opening bars vaguely suggest those of Liszt's *Kennst du das Land.* It is a beautiful song, and its spirit is indicated by the expression-marks (which the composer, as usual, has carefully noted in English) "Slow, with pathos, yet simply." No one could hear the second number of opus 9 without knowing that it is a slumber-song, and takes us into "misty dreamland." This emotional realism is characteristic of MacDowell's songs in general.

Less original and characteristic than the two referred to are the five songs that make up opus 11 and 12. There are many interesting details in them, but the leading ideas are not individual enough to make the accidental loss of these

songs—as that of most of the others would be—irreparable. After this group there is a long interval during which the piano and the orchestra engaged the composer's attention, and it is not till we reach opus 26 that we come across another group—six songs entitled *From an Old Garden*, the verses by Margaret Deland. "That's MacDowell!" we exclaim as soon as we begin the first one, *The Pansy;* and when we have heard the last and perhaps the best of them, *The Mignonette*, we conclude that a lovelier group of flower-songs has never been raised. MacDowell has not set to music *Du bist wie eine Blume*, but he has written songs that are like flowers. *The Clover* suggests Schubert.

The *Cradle Hymn*, opus 33, is tender and simple without being specially new; while its companion, *Idyll*, is one of the most original and fascinating of all the songs. "Lightly, daintily, not too slow," it trips along, telling how a bumble-bee kissed a bluebell, with harmonies quite *à la Tristan and Isolde*—and why not?—at the words "Ah! surely, they're lovers." In *My Jean* the music is as Scotch in every bar as the poem itself.

Special attention must be called to the song preceding this one—*Menie*—which is the saddest of all the MacDowell *Lieder* and one of the very best. I know of nothing in the whole treasury

of songs, from Schubert to Grieg, more exquisitely melancholy, more ravishingly tender, than the chords which translate into music the words "when nature all is sad like me." "Sadly, despondently," the whole song is superscribed; and though the despondency is supposed to be caused primarily by the scorn that's in a maiden's eye, a sympathetic listener guesses that it may also be, in part, that feeling of discouragement and despair which comes to a man of genius when he creates a thing of such subtle beauty that, as he instinctively realizes, it will be born to blush unseen for a long time, if not forever.

The most popular of the MacDowell songs at present is *Thy beaming eyes.* It fully deserves its vogue, for it is a splendid song, though not quite equal to *Menie,* or some of the later ones. It is the third in the group of *Six Love Songs,* opus 40. Perhaps its being less unlike the songs of other composers has caused it to be taken up sooner than some of the others by the public, which is almost as shy of strangeness as children are. The remaining songs of this group are all good, though they do not reveal any new phase of the composer's fancy.

Original and fascinating as are many of the songs so far considered, they are all surpassed by those comprised in the collection entitled

Eight Songs (opus 47), which cannot be too highly commended to those who are not yet aware or convinced that MacDowell belongs in the very front rank of song-writers. For three of them—songs of trees and birds and brown eyes and love—MacDowell has written his own poems, which have the same imaginative, romantic character as his music. The first of these, *The Robin Sings in the Apple Tree*, with its subdued note of woe, is one of the most charming of modern love-songs, to which concert-singers and amateurs have taken a great fancy of late. *Confidence* is a poetic refutation of the notion that love can die, enforced by the eloquence of fresh, buoyant music which puts the scoffers to flight. The third, *The West Wind Croons in the Cedar Trees*, is another of those songs which have the initials E. A. M. stamped on every bar. MacDowell does not attend many concerts or operatic performances, for the reason that he fears being influenced unconsciously by the music of other composers. The song just named is one of many that prove the wisdom of this policy. It does not suggest any other composer, but is as original as a new orchid found by an explorer in a Brazilian forest.

Two of the lyrics in this collection are after Goethe, and both are surpassingly fine. In the *Midsummer Lullaby* how beautifully the

music mirrors the silver clouds in the drowsy air, and the swaying reeds and rushes of Goethe's poem! More delightful still is *In the Woods*, a song of surprising freshness—as inspired as a Shakespearean lyric. Listen to those "la la la's" on page 13, and again on the next page, with the wondrous underlying harmonies and the airy, tripping measures following, and say if you know anything more exquisite in all musical literature! Yet even this does not yet represent the climax of MacDowell's genius as a song-writer. That we find among the three of these *Eight Songs* which are set to poems by W. D. Howells. These poems are remarkably well suited for musical treatment; and MacDowell, so far as I am aware, was the first to discover them for this purpose. The folk-song *Is it the Shrewd October Wind?* is the most beautiful of MacDowell's songs in the Scotch vein. Among all real folk-songs is there one which is more deeply pathetic than this? especially in the last line, where the girl, whose lover has left, on the lonely threshold cowers down and cries. In the deepest grief there is a sweet relief in tears; and the composer seems to have had that in mind when he suddenly changed from minor to major in the last chord, at the word "cries"—a most subtle touch of musical psychology.

Through the Meadows is another of those utterly MacDowellesque songs, the individuality and charm of which the pen can no more describe than a camera can reproduce the splendors of a sunset. But the greatest of these eight songs is *The Sea*, which James Huneker has justly called "the strongest song of the sea since Schubert's *Am Meer*." The rare poetic art with which Howells brings before our eyes the picture of the lover sailing away to sea, while the beloved stands on the shore and cries; followed by the picture of the wreck, and the lover lying asleep, far under, dead in his coral bed—is duplicated in the music, which shows a marvellous gift of emotional coloring in its harmonies, and is, in all other respects, a perfect song. It is not only the best of these *Eight Songs*, it is the best of all the MacDowell songs, of all American songs, one of the best hundred songs ever written, the world over. I shall never forget the eagerness and the delighted surprise with which Paderewski read it over when I made him acquainted with it.

To New York City belongs the honor of having given birth, in 1861, to the composer who has placed American music, so far as the *Lied* and the piano-forte are concerned, on a level with the best that is done in Europe. MacDowell got his musical education partly at

home, partly in Paris, and partly in Germany, where one of his teachers was Raff, who strengthened his natural inclination toward pictorial romanticism in music—programme-music in the most poetic sense of the word. In 1889 he returned to America and took up his abode in Boston, where he continued to compose and teach till 1896, when he accepted an appointment as professor of music at Columbia University.* His summers he spends with his musical, critical, and sympathetic wife —who is a great comfort and aid to him—near Peterboro, New Hampshire. Not far from his house, buried in the dense woods, is a log-cabin whence wonderful harmonies are sometimes wafted by the breezes. Here MacDowell has composed among other things his delightful *Woodland Sketches* and *Sea Pieces* for piano, as well as the last seven of his *Lieder*—the *Four Songs* of opus 56 and the *Three Songs* of opus 58, for which he also wrote the admirable poems, the quality of which may be judged by the following, entitled *Sunrise:*

Sunrise gilds the crested sea
That mocks grim Oban's might;
But at his feet sways sullenly
A ship that died 'the night.

* A sketch of MacDowell's life by the author of this volume was printed in the *Century Magazine* of January, 1897.

The ocean's breast doth throb no more
For such a wreck as she.
The rocks gnaw at her broken heart;
The sun shines pit'lessly.

It is lucky for the cause of American music that MacDowell decided — it was merely a question of choice—to become a composer, instead of a professional poet. We have had several great poets; but the poetic quality in our music had been rare until he came. It animates all of these last seven songs. Several of them —like *Constancy*, *Old Lilac Bushes*, *A Maid Sings Light*, and *Long Ago* (which is like a genuine folk-song, with the added harmonies of an artist) will please all persons of taste at a first hearing, while improving, like all good music, on repetition. Others, like *As the Gloaming Shadows Creep* and *A Winsome Morning Measure*, have deep and subtle charms which only intimate acquaintance reveals, and then we love them like dear friends. One of my favorites is No. 2 of opus 56—*The Swan Bent Low to the Lily*. It illustrates, like many others of these thirty-nine songs, the combination of feminine tenderness with passionate manliness which is characteristic of MacDowell. There is a superb virility and vigor in all his music and yet his favorite expression-mark is "tenderly." These expression-marks in MacDowell's music

must be observed most carefully if the singer and the player are to reveal its essence. It always has a vocal melody that charms by its own freshness and beauty; yet how much its eloquence is enhanced if the pianist knows how to accent the emotional harmonies! Modern taste craves the "bite" of frequent dissonance; yet this must not exist for its own sake, but only as a spice for the melody—as it does in the songs of Edward MacDowell.

Few persons realize how young an art music is. Youngest of all its branches is the art-song. The time between Schubert and MacDowell is less than a century, yet what treasures of genius we have been able to glance at in the pages of this monograph!

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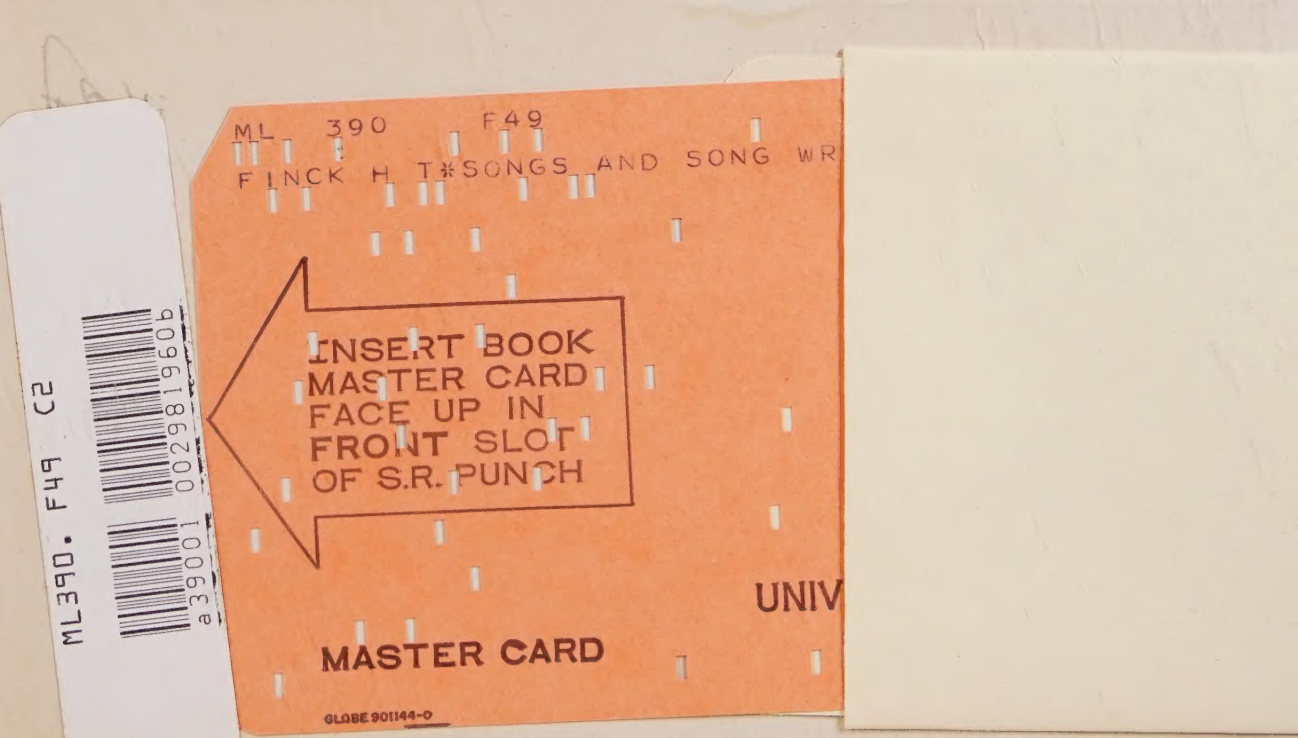
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